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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

LAW OF BAPTISM,

AS IT REGARDS

THE MODE AND THE SUBJECTS.

BY

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THE following Discourses were written for the DEFENCE of the truth in the author's own congregation. They are printed as they were preached; save a few inconsiderable corrections, and the addition of a few notes. They are published at the very general desire of the people for whom they were written. They contain some local allusions, and some references to the present times: but as they may be both local and ephemeral in their circulation, the author chooses not to alter them.

Norwalk, August, 1840.

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LAW OF BAPTISM.

I.

MODE OF BAPTISM.

THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION.

MATTHEW, XXVIII : 19.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

THE disciples of Christ are to be *baptized*. So all evangelical Christians agree : and such is the law of Christ. But while there is an entire agreement with regard to the *authority* of the law, there has arisen a difference of opinion concerning its *interpretation*. All the leading denominations of Protestant Christendom, save one, (and it is to Protestant Christendom, if any where on earth, that we are to look for intelligent views of doctrine and of order, and for evan-

gelical obedience,) all the leading denominations of Protestant Christendom, save one, maintain that the *mode* of baptism is not essential: and for this opinion they go, not to the decrees of the Pope, nor to the traditions of the Papal Church, as we have been slanderously reported, but to the Word of God. Upon the most careful examination, and in making the best and most scrupulous application of the acknowledged rules of interpretation that we are able, we find that *sprinkling* and *pouring* are Scriptural modes of baptism. Many think further, (and I profess myself of this number,) that these are the *only* modes for which we have any clear Scriptural example, or even clear Scriptural authority, if any thing is to depend upon the *mode*. But we think nothing depends on the mode:—that the command to Baptize refers to the *thing done*, rather than to the *mode* of doing it: viz., to a *ritual purifying by some manner of application of water:* and in which the *mode* of the application is a matter of entire indifference; provided it be done decently and reverently, as becomes an ordinance of God. Hence, we regard immersion as valid baptism; and never refuse to admin-

ister it in that mode, when the candidate for baptism cannot be satisfied in conscience with any other.

But while we believe these things, another large denomination of Christians deem it *essential* to baptism, that the *whole body be immersed:* and *so* essential, that they refuse to be united in church membership, or to partake, even occasionally, of the Lord's supper in company with others who hold the same Gospel truth and order; who are of acknowledged piety; who, according to their best understanding, and with the full conviction of their conscience, have been baptized; who differ from themselves only in not having been wholly under water in the manner of their baptism; and who, were they to be convinced that immersion is essential to baptism, would as soon throw their bodies into the fire as refuse to be immersed. Their fault is not *wilful disobedience:* it is not *neglect;* it is not any want of *candor* or *diligence* in examining the question concerning the mode of baptism; it is solely this; instead of subjecting their judgment and conscience, in this matter, to the authority of their Baptist brethren, they have presumed to follow

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their *own* judgment and their *own* conscience as enlightened by a careful study of the word of God.

"To the law and to the testimony." That word shall judge us in the last day, and by that will we be determined now.

In our investigation of the MODE of Baptism, I shall first remark concerning *the principles of interpretation to be applied or admitted in determining this question.*

Then, I shall, upon the basis of these principles, institute three inquiries:

1. *What would the immediate disciples of Christ understand from the simple face of the command "Baptize."*

2. *Is there satisfactory evidence, that they always administered the ordinance of baptism by immersion.*

3. *On the supposition that our Lord was baptized in a given mode, and that the apostles always practised that mode;—is there evidence that they considered that one mode essential.*

The preliminary remarks concerning the principles of interpretation; together with an *application of those principles* to the method of arguing employed by our Baptist brethren, will occupy this first discourse. I shall be

obliged to take up subjects rather foreign from the common field of sermonizing; and such as are rather scholastic, and not very interesting to a mixed assembly. I shall be obliged to tax your patience somewhat: but I will make the matter as clear and as interesting as I can: and discuss no topic which you will not perceive to have a weighty bearing upon the argument before we get through. In the next discourse I shall come at once into the midst of the matter: and I entertain little fear, that I shall be able to show you the truth, on this subject, broadly and solidly based on the word of God.

There cannot be much *Gospel* in such a discussion as this; as the whole genius of the Gospel is averse to disputations about the *mere modes* of rites and ordinances. I will try, however, to discuss the matter in the spirit of the Gospel; and will endeavor to bring in as much of the Gospel of salvation as a disputation about the mere *ceremony* of an ordinance will admit. I proceed

I. TO THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION TO BE APPLIED OR ADMITTED IN DETERMINING THIS CASE.

Sir William Blackstone, in his "Commen-

taries on the Laws of England," cites the following example for the purpose of illustrating *one* of the principles on which laws are to be interpreted.*

"A law of Edward III. forbids all ecclesiastical persons to purchase *provisions* at Rome." Now the word "*provisions*" commonly means "*victuals*;" "*things to eat*;" and at first sight the law of Edward III. seems to forbid the purchasing of *victuals*;—meat,—grain,—eatables,—at Rome.

Suppose now, on a debate concerning the import of this law, one should say, "The law is express: it says "*provisions*," and provisions are "*victuals*." Granted: such is the common acceptation of the word. Suppose he should urge it; and bring a hundred dictionaries, in all of which the first and most common meaning of the word "*provisions*" should be "*victuals*." Suppose, when I question whether the law meant *victuals*, and endeavor to give my reasons, he should lift up his hand toward the sun, and cry, "*It is as plain as the sun in the heavens, and the man who does not see it is not worth arguing with: all the dictionaries say so: it has been conceded a thousand times*

* Blackstone, Introduction, § 2, 3.

that '*provisions*' *means* '*victuals.*'" Suppose he should go further; suppose he should hunt up the word "*provisions*" as used in all the classic English authors from the days of Chaucer and Spencer, and show in ten thousand instances that the word *provisions* means *victuals:* and that, even in its *figurative* uses, it still refers to something to *support* and *nourish:* e. g. as when Mrs. Isabella Graham selected a multitude of texts of Scripture calculated to give her comfort in death, she called them "*Provisions* for passing over Jordan." "Here," says the sticklèr for "*victuals*," "*Here I take my stand.*" "If I have not settled *the meaning of the word* '*provisions*,' *nothing can be settled.*" And so he stretches the law to his dictionaries and classics. Provisions *shall* mean victuals: and all further reasoning is barred away from any concern in settling the question.

You have here, if I mistake not, and as I think I shall be able to show, the substance of the Baptist principles of arguing concerning the question at issue.

But no, says Blackstone; see first for *what reason* the law was made. Search out the meaning of the word "*provisions*" as used in the "*Canon law*" of those days.

"The law," says Blackstone, "might seem to prohibit the buying of *grain* and other *victuals:* but when we consider that the statute was made to repress the usurpations of the Papal See, and that the *nominations to benefices by the Pope* were called *provisions*, we shall see that the restraint is intended to be laid on SUCH *provisions* only."

The word "*provisions*" in this law of Edward III. does *not* mean grain or victuals, or stores of any kind: but, "*nominations to ecclesiastical benefices by the Pope*:" and for *this* law, people may purchase as much meat and grain and other victuals at Rome as they please. The decision of Blackstone carries all common sense with it. Away go the hundred dictionaries and the ten thousand quotations from the classics. No matter how many times it might have been "conceded" that the word provisions commonly means something to eat:—Blackstone himself makes the same concession, and still maintains his interpretation of the law.

Why do I introduce this?

For the purpose of exposing a false principle of interpretation, and of showing what is the true one.

If it should be proved indubitably, (which it cannot be,) that the word *Baptizo* (βαπτιζω) in classic Greek means only to *immerse*;—to immerse the subject *wholly;* this would not settle the question that the command to *Baptize* in the New Testament means indispensably to immerse.

Why would it not?

The classic Greek writers lived from three hundred to eight hundred years before Christ. They lived in another country. They were familiar with another set of ideas,—especially on religious matters. The Greek language in their hands was adapted to the religious ideas of heathen: in the hands of Jews it was adapted to the religious ideas of those who were acquainted with the true God.

More particularly:—The Greek was not introduced into Judea till after the conquest of that country by Alexander, 300 years before Christ. It prevailed very gradually; its genius received a mould from the genius of the Hebrew; Greek words were applied to Jewish ideas; and to ideas which were never compounded into an existence in the land of classic Greek:—as in the words translated

Holy, Holiness, Sin, Faith, Repentance, Justification, Salvation. The Hebrew continued to be spoken with the Greek: and it is even contended with no small force of argument that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, as our Savior at times spake in Hebrew; e. g. as when he said (Mark v.: 41,) "*Talitha cumi*," and as when he cried out upon the cross, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani.*"

The pure Greek of the old Grecians is called *Classic* Greek. The Greek of the New Testament has been called the "*Greek of the Synagogue.*" And every man, who is both a classical and a Bibical student, knows full well that a good lexicon (or dictionary) of the Greek of the synagogue must be a peculiar lexicon of the New Testament Greek. And such we have: elaborate and excellent lexicons. But if we read the classic Greek by these, we shall make nonsense; and if we read the New Testament altogether by the classic lexicons, we shall make most arrant nonsense.

Let me give an illustration or two of the effect of arguing the New Testament mean-

ing from the original and from the classic use of a word.

Some years since, I met with a man, who was liberally educated, a thorough scholar, an able lawyer, and possessed of splendid natural abilities, but sceptical in his views of religion.

With this man I undertook to reason of the necessity of being born of the Holy Ghost. Now, the word in the Greek Testament for Ghost, or Spirit, is *Pneuma*, (πνευμα), which originally, and in the classic Greek, most commonly meant WIND. This man would have me argue by book. He turned me to the Greek Testament (John iii. 5.) "See here," says he, "It reads, and you know it reads, 'Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of *water* and of WIND, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' What right," said he, "have you to change the original classic meaning of '*Pneuma*,' (πνευμα), '*wind*,' here, any more than you have of '*Hudatos*' (ὑδατος) '*water*?' And see, further," said he, "there is the same word in the 8th verse,—letter for letter,—and there you do not say, the '*Spirit* blow-

eth where it listeth;' you say, 'the WIND bloweth where it listeth.'"

He was right in the original classic use of the word. And if I had argued on the principles, on which (I shall show) our Baptist brethren have argued, I should have been obliged to allow, that the renewing by the "*Spirit* of God," or even the personal existence of such a *Spirit*, is not taught or referred to in this passage.

With all due respect for our Baptist brethren, I humbly conceive that in this matter, they have fallen into an egregious error in their attempted corrections of our common translation.

I have seen copies of the New Testament, published by the Bible Society of the Baptist denomination, in which, on a page after the title page they have printed *the Greek* of such words as are adopted from the Greek into our translation; opposite to these words they print the words as they are Anglicized, or turned into an English shape by a change of their termination: then, opposite to each, a word which they maintain is the necessary translation. Thus,

Meaning of the words used in this translation.

Αγγελος,	Angel,	Messenger,
Βαπτιζω,	Baptize,	Immerse,
Βαπτισμος,	Baptism,	Immersion,
Εκκλησια,	Church,	Assembly.

It has been strenuously asserted that these words were not translated in our authorized version, because King James and the translators wished to shield certain Popish practices, and to keep the people in ignorance, for the purpose of maintaining a union of Church and State.

I shall not trouble myself to attempt a refutation of such a charge as this. The descendants of the Pilgrims, who dwell amid the graves of their fathers, may believe it if they can. They may deem it no calumny upon the virtue and understanding of their Puritan fathers, if they can, when they hear it alleged of those, whose ministers, in hundreds, gave up their livings; were turned out of the ministry, and otherwise suffered persecution, rather than wear the garments of popery: they may believe it if they can, of those who left their homes and their all, and came to cast their fortunes and the fortunes of their posterity in this then howling wilderness, rather than *conform* to what they deemed the

Popish rites remaining in the Established Church of England; they may believe, if they can, that these would have accepted a Bible which was dishonestly translated, for the very purpose of maintaining those relics of popery and that ecclesiastical despotism, which from their very souls they abhorred. You may believe it if you can, of your ministers and yourselves, that we all cling to a dishonest translation, "To keep people in ignorance" and to "maintain a union of Church and State." I shall not trouble myself to answer such an allegation as this.

But to return:—it is maintained that these words, and some others, are improperly, if not dishonestly, left *untranslated*,* and that the words which are given in the third column as the meaning ought to be substituted for the words adopted in our translation. Thus: where we read "*Church*,"† we ought to read "*Assembly*:" where we read "*Angel*"

* "The mass of readers do not understand the original, and translators of the Bible, by *adopting*, not translating, have hidden the meaning from the multitude." JEWETT on Baptism, p. 31.

† The word "*Church*" begins to be nearly as troublesome as the word "*Baptize*." While the word "*Baptize*" remains in the Bible, it is difficult to persuade

in our version, we ought to read "*Messenger;*" where we read "*Baptize,*" we ought to read "*Immerse:*" and where we read "*Baptism,*" we ought to read "*Immersion.*"

Now it appears to me that this is falling into a worse error than that of the unbelieving scholar concerning the word *Pneuma,* (πνευμα) or spirit. Thus, "*Angel*" is a Greek word, not translated, but *adopted** into the translation from the Greek (Αγγελος). Our Baptist brethren insist that this adoption is wrong: that the word ought to be *translated* by the word "*messenger.*"

people that it means exclusively "to *immerse*;" and while the word "Church" remains, people will somehow follow it out to a covenant which embraces infants.

* Nothing is more common than such *adoption* of words from the Greek. The process is going on to this day; particularly our terms of science and of art, are almost wholly *adopted* (and compounded) from the Greek. Strike all such *adopted* words from our language, and scarcely could two people, even in the ordinary walks of life, hold a conversation for a single hour.

"Et nova *fictaque nuper* habebunt verba fidem, si GRAECO *fonte* cadant, PARCE DETORTA."

"Licuit SEMPERQUE LICEBIT"

Signatum præsente nota producere nomen."

Q. Horat. Ars Poetica.

Now it is certainly true, that in the classic Greek, the word ANGEL (αγγελος) means *messenger;* and means nothing like the idea which *we* attribute to it: viz., of a *spiritual* being of an order superior to man and inferior to God. The Greeks even had another word to signify such a spiritual being, "*Demon*" (δαιμων), and *Angelos* (αγγελος) meant nothing but "*messenger.*" But mark how the classic Greek was modified when adapted to Jewish ideas. The Jews used the word "*Demon*" (δαιμων) to express only an *evil* spirit; a *fallen* angel: and "*angel*" they appropriated to the *good* spirits. And to translate the word in all cases* as the Baptist Bible society would teach us, instead of *adopting* it into English, untranslated, would make the most arrant nonsense.

For example: take Acts xxiii. 8, and translate it according to the instructions of the Baptist Bible society at the beginning of their Testaments, and according to the view of the doubting scholar, who would square every thing by the original classic Greek

* The word is *sometimes* used in the New Testament in the simple sense of messenger: as *Pneuma* is sometimes in the simple sense of *wind.*

meaning, and make the Savior say that men must be born of "water and of *wind*."

In our common version the passage reads thus: "For the Sadducees say, there is no *resurrection*, neither *angel* nor *spirit:* but the Pharisees confess both." The word *resurrection* here falls under the same rule, if you take its meaning from the classic Greek. The Greeks had no such idea as that of the resurrection of the body: and of course no word for it, but their ανασταοις (*anastasis*) was a simple "rising up." In our translation the passage reads thus: "For the Sadducees say there is no *resurrection*, neither *angel* nor *spirit;* but the Pharisees confess both." According to the principles on which our translation is branded as inadequate and unfaithful, we must read it thus: For the Sadducees say there is no *rising up*, neither MESSENGER nor WIND." But did they ever say so? Did they ever deny the existence of a such a thing as a *messenger* or of such a thing as *wind?* To translate it so, is to make the Bible speak not only nonsense but falsehood.

The same reason existed for converting the Greek *Baptizo* into the English *Baptize*, as for converting *Angelos* into *Angel*. There

was no word in English which would fill up the idea. If baptism was to be performed by sprinkling, it would not do to translate *Baptizo* by the word *sprinkle*, because all sprinkling is not baptism. If baptism were exclusively by *immersion*, still the word *immerse* would not express the whole or the essential idea: and all immersion is not baptism. The word *Baptize* in the New Testament refers less to the *manner* of the application of water, than to the *design* and *import* of the application: it is a *sacred* application: a *ritual* application: denoting a ritual *purifying*, and *referring to an important and essential truth* for its *signification*. The New Testament use of the word involved a reference to these ideas,* just as the word *Baptize* does now: and neither of the words *sprinkle, pour, immerse*, has the essential quality of referring to these ideas. Thus: if I go and throw myself off from one of the wharves at high tide, I am *immersed* beyond question: but am I *baptized?* Our young men and

* See an able article in the Am. Biblical Repository from the pen of Prest. Edward Beecher: where this point is most thoroughly made out. Am. Bib. Rep. Jan. 1840.

boys *immerse* themselves many times every summer, but are they baptized? I think all would deem it improper to say so. The fundamental idea of baptism is wanting.

It would therefore be an inadequate and improper translation to substitute the word *immerse* for the word *baptize*, in every place in the New Testament: as much as it would to make that substitution which should make the Sadducees deny the existence of such a thing as a "messenger," or "wind." The translators of our Bible as intelligent and honest men, *could* not translate "*Baptizo*" by "*Immerse*" on this ground alone: and I shall show that they could not on another: as in the New Testament the word denotes often an application of water (or of something else,) by *sprinkling* or by *pouring*. It is used often where the idea of immersion is entirely excluded.

Indeed, if any fault is to be found with the word *Baptize*, as though it were a Greek word instead of a translation; precisely the same objection applies to the words "*Immerse*" and "*Immersion*." These are as purely *Latin*, as "Baptize" is Greek: and we might with the same propriety turn round and say,

Why do you not *translate* those *Latin* words? Do you mean to "keep people in ignorance," and "promote a union of Church and State," by talking to the people, like the Pope, in *Latin?*

But what words could they substitute for these? There is no *one* word which fills up the idea of immerse. "*Dip*," and "*plunge*," and "*duck*," are English words: but they cannot be substituted for the word *immerse;* though they come nearer to it than any other word in the language. Shall we translate immerse by "*Dip*." I *dip* my pen in ink when I write: I do not *immerse* it in ink. Shall we say "*plunge?*" But a horse *plunges* often without being immersed; and to "*Duck*" is only to dip *the head* under water.

To my mind, the noise that is made about the non-translation of the word Baptize, is utterly without foundation. To adopt the principles on which the noise is made, and carry them out, would lead to gross absurdity. To say that people would never have made any question about the *mode* of baptism if the word had only been translated *immerse*, is only to say that if the word had been improperly translated, the people would

have been misled. There is no reason in the world, that I know of, for thinking that our translators were either ignorant or dishonest in this matter. Had they not turned *Baptizo* into an English word, they must have expressed it by a circumlocution that would have amounted to a gloss,* rather than a translation, or they must have coined a new word for the purpose.

Besides, while so large a part of the learned world fully believe that Baptism in the New Testament often signified an application of water which was performed by sprinkling or by pouring; how could we have a Bible in which all denominations may agree, if we insist upon translating the word Baptize either by "*immerse*," by "*pour*," or by "*sprinkle?*" Were there no other reason, this would be sufficient for adopting the original word, instead of translating it by either.

And yet, our Baptist brethren have broken off from the national Bible Society, for the very reason that it will not be thus instru-

* E. g. How could the word Πεντηκοστης (*Pentecost*) Acts. ii. 1, have been managed, save by *adopting* the very word, or by making a *gloss*, rather than a translation?

mental in putting forth to the world a sectarian Bible! They have a denominational Bible Society, entitled the "*American and Foreign Bible Society*," which issues its foreign translations on the principle of substituting the word immerse for baptize: and by their notes at the beginning of the New Testament they have, in effect, done the same for the English translation: with how little reason, I have shown.

I say not this out of disrespect or fault-finding. The right of conscience and of private judgment is theirs. Most freely, with no disturbance or complaint on our part, let them enjoy it. I only aim to point out, what I consider the error of the principle. Whether I have succeeded, you will judge. We impeach not their integrity in the least. Would that *our* integrity in this matter, and *our* rights of conscience and of private judgment might be equally respected. But it is with no less grief than astonishment, that I read in the papers the last month, the following "*Resolution*" of the "American and Foreign Bible Society" at their anniversary on the 28th of April of the present year.*

* It was moved by Prof. Eaton, of Hamilton Institute, and seconded by Rev. Mr. Malcolm.

"*Resolved*, that the *fact, that the nations of the earth must now look to the* BAPTIST DENOMINATION ALONE FOR FAITHFUL TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD, a responsibility is imposed upon them, demanding for its full discharge, an unwonted degree of union, of devotion, and of strenuous and persevering effort throughout the entire body."

That our Baptist brethren mean to be faithful in translating the word of God, we doubt not. But are we to believe that all the missionaries of Protestant Christendom throughout the world, save "the Baptist denomination alone," have given to the poor heathen *unfaithful* translations of the word of God? *Can* no "*faithful translation*" come from any denomination on earth save *one?** Are "the

* In the report of the Am. and For. Bible Society, for 1840, (p. 39), the translations made by all other denominations are stigmatized as "Versions in which the real meanings of . . . words, is PURPOSELY KEPT OUT OF SIGHT:". . . so that "Baptists cannot circulate *faithful* versions . . . unless they print them at their own expense." They ask, (p. 40). "Shall we look on unconcernedly while *unfaithful versions* (as we hold them) are circulated." They assert, (p. 45) "It is known that the British and For. Bible Society, and the American Bible Society, have virtually COMBINED to OBSCURE at

nations of the earth," according to the tenor of this resolution, dependent on "the Baptist denomination *alone*" for this?

Having remarked so far upon the principles of interpretation, I come now to make an application of those principles to the mode of arguing adopted by our Baptist brethren.

least a part of Divine Revelation:"—and that "these societies . . . continue to circulate versions of the Bible *unfaithful*, at least so far as the subject of baptism is concerned; and that they are by this means *propagating their peculiar sentiments* under the auspices, and at the expense of the millions of all denominations who contribute to their funds; and who are thus made the unconscious instruments of *diffusing the opinions of a party, instead of the uncorrupted word of Jehovah.*"

This last paragraph is not less remarkable for its deliberate charge of dishonesty upon all other denominations than for its *singular admission* of that, which if it be a fact,—it seems to me,—is fatal to the immersion scheme. The allegation is, that to transfer *baptizo* into BAPTIZE, instead of rendering it by the word *Immerse*, is to "*propagate the peculiar sentiments*" of Pædo-baptists. That is, the word *baptizo* is so used in the New Testament, as almost without fail, to lead those who learn its meaning from the Bible alone to conclude that it *does not*, in the Bible, *mean immersion:* and if you leave people to learn its meaning from the context for themselves, you "*propagate the peculiar sentiments*" of Pædo-baptists among them! Nay, that the same

It was first attempted to prove that *Baptize* means exclusively to immerse, from the *etymology* of the word. *Baptize* is truly a derivative from *Bapto:* and the *primitive*

effect will be produced when such a Bible is given by *Baptist hands*, and *accompanied by Baptist instructions!* If Baptists circulate such a version, they "are thus made the unconscious instruments of *diffusing the opinions*" of the "*party*"—of Pædo-baptists!

I believe it. It is even so. But the conclusion is,—(and the objection of our Baptist brethren unwittingly adopts this very conclusion as its basis,) that the word *baptizo*, as it is used in the New Testament, does not mean immerse; and will not be so understood by those who judge of its meaning by its *use* in the sacred writings. I believe, further, that to translate the word *baptizo* by the word *immerse* throughout the New Testament, would in many cases make the Bible speak what is demonstrably not true. e. g. I fully believe, (as in Acts ix. 18,) that "Paul arose (or stood up) and was *baptized*." "That he arose and *was immersed*," I do not believe. I am persuaded it is utterly untrue. To *transfer* the word *baptizo* here, and leave people to judge for themselves what was done, is certainly to "propagate the peculiar sentiments" of Pædo-baptists. But to insinuate that Pædo-baptists mean to "corrupt the word of Jehovah," or "to diffuse the opinions of a party, instead of the "uncorrupted" word of God, by so transferring the word, is,—methinks,—too gross a calumny to gain credit.

meaning of Bapto is to "dip," or to "immerse." It was contended that it *always* means to immerse. This appears to me to be the turning point on which Dr. Judson became a Baptist. He insisted that *Bapto* means always to dip or to immerse, and that *Baptize* means to "MAKE IMMERSED." This was long urged and most strenuously insisted on as the foundation of the Baptist argument—that *Bapto* means *nothing but* to dip or immerse.

But upon examination it was found, that the meaning of *Bapto* had undergone important changes; that it often meant only to *color*, from an allusion simply to the known EFFECT of dipping, and not to the ACT of dipping: and so it is often used, in instances where dipping is wholly out of the question. Thus Hippocrates says of a certain liquid, that when it *drops* upon the garments, they are *Bapto'd*;" or *stained*. They are *Bapto'd*, by DROPPING *the liquid upon* them.*

So Homer, speaking of a battle of frogs and mice on the borders of the lake, says, (εβαπτετο αἱματι λιμνη,)—"The lake was *Bapto'd* with blood." Says President Edward

* Carson, p. 60.

Beecher,* " On this there was once a battle royal to prove that it could be proper to speak of dipping a lake into the blood of a mouse : and all the powers of rhetoric were put in requisition to justify the usage." † Indeed, on the ground then taken by Dr. Gale and by others, it was necessary to fight for this ; for if they could not make it out, their foundation was gone. But since Carson showed the absurdity of the ground, it has been generally abandoned. And yet while the *ground* is given up ; the *tracts* based on this ground are still in circulation ; and *do their work* in making proselytes, on the strength of an argument which well informed Baptists have in general given up as thoroughly exploded. Such a change in the meaning of a word is a very common occurrence, and it is conceded on all hands that the *derivation* of a word is no certain index to its meaning.

* Am. Bib. Repos. 1840, p. 50.

† *Carson* says, " What a monstrous paradox in rhetoric is the figuring of the dipping of a lake in the blood of a mouse ! Yet Dr. Gale supposes the lake was dipped by hyperbole. The literal sense, he says, is, the lake was *dipped in blood !* Never was there such a figure." p. 67.

Thus the word "*Tint*," comes from a Latin word (Tingo) which originally meant to *dip*: then it meant to *color* or "*tinge*," and now we speak of the "*tints*" of the clouds or of the flowers, without ever thinking, that the flowers or the clouds have been *dipped* to give them their coloring. So the word "*Spirit*" comes *unstranslated* from the Latin "*Spiritus*," of which the original meaning was "*a breath.*" But what mortal will now contend that a *spirit* is nothing but *breath?* And yet there is the same reason for complaining that the word *spirit* is an *untranslated Latin* word, that there is for complaining that *Baptize* is an untranslated *Greek* word: and the reason from *etymology* for making *spirit* mean breath, is just as strong as for making *Baptize* mean immerse from its derivation from Bapto. So the words "*bind*" and "*bonds*" originally meant to tie up, or manacle with cords or chains. But who thinks now of putting cords or fetters on a man when he is "*bound*" to keep the peace or to appear in court: or when he is put under "*bonds*" to fulfil the condition of a bargain or agreement?

The mode of making out immersion from

the *derivation* of Baptizo having been overthrown, and its very elements scattered to the wind, the learned Carson has taken another ground ; and this is the one now universally relied on. I refer to Carson because his research has made this field his own on the Baptist side of the question ; because he is undoubtedly a very learned and able man,* the *chief* indeed on the Baptist side in this part of the field of controversy : because their writers† are fond of referring to his arguments as something which can never be overthrown : and because, indeed, all the more recent works, to which I have had access, are little else than Carson over again. For these reasons I shall follow his argument ; fully confident that if it does not stand in him it will never stand in any the strength of any man.

Mr. Carson has, with immense labor, hunted over the Greek classics, and found, as

* "Mr. Carson, inferior in learning and research to none of the Baptists." [Edward Beecher, Am. Bib. Repos. 1840. p. 51.]

† See the preface to *Jewett* on Baptism, where he says, (p. 4), "*The spirit* exhibited in the treatise of Carson is not to be commended ; his reasoning, however, is *unanswerable*."

he thinks, that the word Baptizo always means, in classic Greek, to dip or immerse. That this is its common meaning in *classic* Greek is certain: though I think he has failed to make it out to be its exclusive meaning.

Having settled its classic meaning, he then attempts to make the New Testament meaning in every instance conform to it. Here lies the tug. He cannot accomplish this, unless we will allow him to take the thing to be proved, for granted. The New Testament use is,—as I think I shall show,—most clearly and indefeasibly against him.

Here lies his error: and it is fundamental. He relies on the classic Greek to determine the New Testament Greek: while the facts in the case are as much at war with his conclusions, as the facts in another case would be with the conclusions which should interpret "*provisions*" in the law of Edward III. to mean victuals: or with the reasonings which would make our Lord say, that men must be born of "water and of wind;" or with those which would make the Sadducees deny that there is any "*messenger*" or "*wind.*"

Here is a point to be settled: What do Matthew and Mark, and Luke, and John, and Paul mean by *Baptize?* To settle this point Homer, and Pindar, and Xenophon are brought up to testify as to the meaning of the word in *their* country and in *their* day. Does this settle the question? Is it certain that the word when adapted to *Jewish* ideas and *Jewish* rites, meant precisely what it did in the days of Homer and Pindar? I humbly conceive it might be as well to call the Evangelists and Apostles themselves, and ask *them* what they meant. But, says the examiner, Pindar, and Homer, and the rest of the Greek classics have *settled the question* what Evangelists and Apostles *must* mean: and so,—(I shall show,)—he determines that they *shall* mean, if he has to get this meaning out of them by torture. But what is the use of calling up Matthew and Mark, and the Apostles as witnesses at all, if the question is settled before they come?

Carson, *having finished his appeal to the classics*, takes his position. He takes his "*position*" before we are through with the evidence, or even come to that part of the evidence on which the question really turns.

Before coming to the New Testament he says, (p. 79), "*My position is, that it always signifies to dip, never expressing any thing but mode.*" He admits that he has all lexicographers against him :* and I shall show that

* Our Baptist brethren have the lexicographers against them on the question of the *exclusive* sense *immerse*, more thoroughly than many of them seem to be aware of. All the lexicographers give other significations. And even the learned Cox is much mistaken here. He defies us, (p. 83), "to point to a single lexicon which does not give *dipping*, *plunging*, or *immersing*, as the unquestionably settled, and universally primitive meaning of the word."

The defiance can be met, and that on authority which our Baptist brethren are fond of quoting as the very best—the *native Greek*. *Mr. R. Robinson*, (Hist. of Bapt.), quoted in Pengilly, (p. 72), says—[and it is often fondly repeated,] "The native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners, and they have ALWAYS understood the word *baptism* to signify *dipping*."—"In this case, the Greeks ARE UNEXCEPTIONABLE GUIDES."

Be it so. I turn then to native Greek lexicographers to show that Mr. Carson's challenge can be triumphantly met : and that if the Greek Church "*always* practise immersion," (which they do not—see "*The Chronicle of the Church*,"—New Haven, No. 167) they did it not because "native Greeks" considered immersion *essential* from the *meaning of the word* :—and in fine, to show—from what our brethren claim as "*unexceptionable*

if the lexicographers make any account of the New Testament or of the Christian fathers, they *ought* to be against him. His mistake lies here: he has appealed to Pindar, and Aristotle, and the rest of the heathen classics; while the proper appeal lies not TO these, but FROM these to Paul, and Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John, and the fathers who wrote in Greek. He

guides," that to *baptize*, it is BY NO MEANS NECESSARY TO IMMERSE.

I copy the following from the "*Chronicle of the Church*," (N. Haven, May 25, 1838,) as fully establishing these points. "The oldest native Greek lexicographer is HESYCHIUS, who lived in the fourth century of the Christian era. He gives only the word *βαπτω*, [*bapto*], and the only meaning he gives the word is *αντλεω*, [*antleo*,] to *draw* or *pump* water.

"Next in order comes SUIDAS, a native Greek who wrote in the 10th century. He gives only the derivative *βαπτιζω*, [*baptizo*,] and defines it by *πλυνω*, [*pluno*,] *to wash*."—"We come down to the present century, at the beginning of which, we find GASES, a learned Greek, who with great labor and pains compiled a large and valuable lexicon of the *ancient* Greek language. His book, in two volumes quarto, is a work deservedly *held in high estimation by all*, and IS GENERALLY USED BY NATIVE GREEKS. It should also be remarked that he is a member of the Greek Church, which always baptizes by immersion, except in cases

has taken his stand too soon, and decided the question before coming to the most important testimony.

But having made his appeal and taken his position, Paul and Mark must be stretched

of extreme urgency. The following are his definitions of *bapto* and *baptizo*. (Ed. Venice, 2 vols, 4to.")

ΒΑΠΤΩ [*bapto*]

—βρεχω, [brecho] *to wet, moisten, bedew.*
—πλυνω, [pluno] *to wash* [*viz. clothes.*]
—γεμιζω, [gemizo] *to fill.*
—βυθιζω, [buthizo] *to dip.*
—αντλεω, [antleo] *to draw, to pump water.*

ΒΑΠΤΙΖΩ [*baptizo*]

—βρεχω (brecho) *to wet, moisten, bedew.*
—λουω [louo] *to wash, to bathe.*
—αντλεω [antleo] *to draw, to pump water.*

"These are the definitions of a native Greek, who, the Baptists tell us, are "infinitely better authority than European lexicographers,"—of one who not only does not give *dipping* or *immersion* as the primitive signification of *baptizo*, but who does not give it at all, except inferentially; as in all these definitions, the idea of *immersion* can be made out only by inference." It is a clear case, then, that the Greeks do not consider the word as meaning, necessarily, an immersion. Their baptizing, in some cases otherwise than by immersion shows, also, that they do not consider immersion *essential* to baptism, either from the meaning of the word, or from any other reason.

on this bed of the heathen classics: and I shall show how unmercifully they are stretched and racked in the process.

Thus, when in the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, which was translated into Greek for the use of the Alexandrian Jews, about 170 years before Christ, it is said, Eccl. xxxiv. 30, "He that *washeth* himself because of a dead body and toucheth it again, what availeth his *washing*."* "The word *washeth* here is βαπτιζομενος — "BEING BAPTIZED." The allusion is to Numb. xix. 16. "And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, &c."—"A clean person shall take the hyssop, and dip it in the water, and *sprinkle* it upon the tent," &c. . . . "and upon him that toucheth a bone, or one slain, or a grave." The conclusion should be, I think, inevitably, that the *baptizing* here was done by *sprinkling*, and that here is a clear instance in the Alexandrine Greek—(the

* While the word "*washeth*," here is βαπτιζομενος [*baptized*;] the word "*washing*" is λουτρω, "*washing*, showing conclusively that the writer held the two words βαπτιζω [BAPTIZO] and λουω [*louo*"—TO WASH] as SYNONYMOUS. Of course dipping, or immersing, is not essential to baptizing.

sort in common use among the Jews,)—where the word *baptize* is used to denote a *purification by sprinkling*, with no reference to dipping or immersing at all.

But Carson says, No. "When I have proved the meaning of a word by the authority of the whole consent of Greek literature, I will not surrender it *to the supposition of the strict adherence of the Jewish nation*, in the time of writing the Apocrypha to *the Mosaic ritual.*"* (p. 99.)

The question then comes to this dilemma: either the Jews had *abandoned* this mode of purifying from a dead body, as specifically and minutely pointed out by God—*or*, *here was* A BAPTISM BY SPRINKLING. Carson is driven here to *assume*, and that without the least shadow or *pretence* of authority, that when God had commanded a purification by *sprinkling*, the Jewish nation had turned about and made an immersion of it. If we do not allow this assumption to pass with no proof, and receive it as an established *cer-*

* It should be observed that my business at this stage of the discussion, is not to follow out all his arguments in detail, but to point out his false principles of reasoning.

tainty, then Carson's "position" has been overthrown, and here is a *baptism by sprinkling*.

But difficulties multiply upon him as he proceeds. Thus, in Mark vii. 4: "And when they come from the market, except they *wash*, they eat not." The original is, "Except they are *baptized*, they eat not;" which, I shall show hereafter, is, Except they "*wash their hands*," *i. e.* perform a ceremonial purification upon them, they eat not.

The learned Campbell, who wished very much to establish immersion as the proper meaning of baptism,* could see no other

* "Nothing," says Mr. Ewing, "but the celebrity of Dr. Campbell and the satisfaction of obtaining a concession from a man supposed to be an opponent, can account for the eulogies pronounced on his Notes on Matt. iii. 11, and Mark, vii. 3, 4. After all, what has he done in them towards ascertaining the meaning of *baptizo*? Has he illustrated its various acceptations? Has he given any induction of examples, scriptural or classical, for the translation he has preferred?—He has done nothing of this kind, on this subject, in any one passage in all his works. What then has he done? He has appealed to one of the worst authorities among the Fathers of ecclesiastical

mode of getting along here than by supposing that the *hands* were dipped, and so the immersion, (or baptism,) predicated of the *hands*. He knew very well that no history of Jewish customs could furnish a scrap of evidence to show that whenever Jews *had been in the market*, they always immersed their whole bodies. But unfortunately for him the original language is so definite as to show conclusively that the baptism here spoken of is the baptism of the *persons*: "Except *they*, (the persons), are baptized:" not "Except their *hands* are baptized." Carson reproves this fault of Campbell, (p. 101,) and says, that Dr. Campbell's notion that this baptism refers to the hands as a washing by "*dipping them*" he "does not approve." He very properly calls it "*An ingenious conceit, without any authority from the practice of the language.*" But how does Carson himself dispose of the difficulty? In a very summary way, indeed. He has shown the meaning of *baptizo* from the heathen clas-

antiquity, and to one of the worst authorities among commentators since the revival of letters; and to these he has added the account of his own assertion." Ewing on Baptism, p. 108.

sics: and he proves the universal custom of the Jews, always to *immerse* themselves, from the *meaning of the word!* I beg his pardon: the meaning of the word is the very thing that is in question here. We cannot allow him to prove a matter in question by first assuming it as true. What is the *historical fact* as to what the Jews did before eating whenever they came from the market? Settle this and you settle the meaning of the word baptize in this connection. But no, Carson is determined that the historical fact shall be settled by the meaning of the word, and the thing in dispute shall be proved by itself; no matter though all history is against it. He has proved the meaning of the word from the heathen classics; and no matter for any difficulties in the way; the Evangelists *shall* mean immersion by it. No matter though it is proved that the Jews purified themselves by *pouring water on the hands;* and that "The manner of the purifying of the Jews," was from "water pots, holding about three firkins" (at the largest computation about two-thirds of a barrel,) "a-piece," from which water might be *poured*,—or *run* on

the hands; but in which no man could be immersed. "*I care not*," says he, "*that ten thousand such examples were brought forward;*" he insists that the word *baptize* shall here mean to *dip*, viz. to dip the whole body; because Greek literature so uses the word baptize. (p. 99.) No matter how improbable it may be that the Jews, always immersed their whole bodies as often as they came from the market; no matter though no record or trace of such a custom is found anywhere in the world, unless it be in this assumed meaning of the word baptize;—no matter though no such custom has been heard of the Jews, wherever they have been dispersed throughout the world for so many ages to this day;—no matter that though the purifying is still kept, it is still performed by *pouring* water on the *hands;* or holding them in a stream of water *running* from a vessel:—Carson maintains still and stoutly that, "*We have here the authority of the Holy Spirit for the Jewish custom.*" "If," says he, "I have established the acceptation of this word by the consent of use, even an *inexplicable* difficulty in this case, would not affect the certainty of my conclusion."

(p. 100.) I humbly beg leave to differ from him; and you may judge whether I have alleged sufficient reason. The Holy Spirit has indeed said that the Jews were *baptized* as often as they came from the market; but the Holy Spirit has not said that the word baptize here means to immerse. The *meaning* is the thing *in question.* And, it seems to me, that a reference to the plain facts in the case authorizes us to consider rather this, that the Holy Spirit regarded that as a *baptism of the person*, which was performed by *pouring water on the hands;* as I shall show more particularly hereafter. I am not now to follow arguments in particular, farther than to point out the fallacy in the *principle* of arguing. If Carson has failed here, he is overthrown, and entirely so. I do think that he is shown to have reasoned from false principles, and to have failed. And I know of few among the more intelligent Baptists, who will not be ready to admit, that if the very basis of Carson's argument be overthrown, the whole fabric of their peculiar system is broken up and falls to the ground.

Carson argues in the same manner with

regard to baptism of the tables (couches) in Mark, vii. 4. He says, (p. 114,) "But with respect to Mark, vii. 4, though it were proved that the couches *could not be immersed*, I would not yield an inch of the ground I have occupied." Now how shall we argue with a man who will not admit an absolute impossibility to be any obstacle in the way of his theory; the couches were baptized, and if it "*be proved*" that "*the couches could not be immersed*," he will not yield an inch; he will maintain still that they were *immersed*. "And I may add," says he, (p. 116,) "that the couches might have been so constructed, that they might be conveniently taken to pieces." Indeed! what shall we not allow him to suppose "*might* have been," rather than grant the possibility that the Jews "*might*" have used this word baptize in a sense different from that of the old heathen Greeks?

Nor would it seem to make any matter to Mr. Carson, how often people had been "baptized" in other modes than immersion; he would still maintain his ground. "I care not," says he,—"I care not if there never had been a human being immersed in water

since the creation of the world, if the word denotes immersion, and if Christ enjoins it, I will contend for it as confidently as if all nations had been daily in the practice of baptizing"—(immersing) " each other," (p. 155.) True, IF the word means *immerse* and NEVER means anything else. But I humbly suppose that the common practice of a people who called a purifying by sprinkling or pouring, a *baptism*, would have some little weight upon the question what that people did in fact understand by the words baptize and baptism.

So when Carson comes to the baptism of the Holy Ghost ; it is nothing to him that the Scriptures represent this uniformly under the mode of " pouring," " coming down like rain," " and shedding forth." He says, " *It is a fixed point, that baptism means immersion* ;" " and in the examination of the reference in the baptism of the Spirit, NOTHING CAN BE ADMITTED inconsistent with this ;" and then adds, (p. 164), " The baptism of the Spirit MUST HAVE a reference to *immersion*, BECAUSE—*baptism is immersion !*" I would reply, *That*, Mr. Carson, is the very thing to be proved ; whether baptism is ex-

clusively—immersion. But he *insists* upon it directly in the same page, and puts his words in italics; "*Pouring cannot be the figurative baptism, because baptism never literally denotes pouring.*"—"*Pouring* could not represent the pouring of the Spirit, because the Spirit is not literally poured."

I would reply,—But, Mr. Carson, does not God himself say, "I will *pour* out my Spirit?" But, replies he, "Believers are said to be *immersed into* the Spirit, not because there is any thing like *immersion* in the manner of the reception of the Spirit, but from the resemblance between an object *soaked* in a fluid, and the sanctification of all the members of the body and faculties of the soul." (pp. 167, 168.)

I say nothing about the resemblance between "*soaking*" and "sanctifying;" but he says truly, there is "nothing like *immersion*," in the manner of receiving the Spirit; nor, of course, is there in the manner of conferring it; yet a *baptism* there is, Christ being witness; and the *mode* of that baptism is represented by a "*pouring out*," "*shedding forth*," "*coming down*," "*falling upon*."

But immediately Mr. Carson responds,

(p. 168), "There was a *real* baptism (immersion), in the *emblems* of the Spirit."

I answer, Christ did not say, ye shall be "*immersed*" into the "*emblems*" of the Spirit; he said "ye shall be *baptized* with the HOLY GHOST; with the *Spirit itself*, not with its "*emblems*."

I would follow Mr. Carson farther here, did I deem it necessary. But I think I have gone far enough to show that he has failed, most signally failed, in that which is the very foundation and element of his argument. He will prove every thing if we will let him assume every thing. But we cannot. His principles of reasoning are unsound; and if you allow him these unsound principles, he still begs the question. You have seen how the Evangelists are put to the torture when they are stretched on this Procrustean bed of the heathen Greeks. Even granting that Carson has rightly settled the question with regard to the heathen Greeks, I think I have shown his argument to be as inconclusive as that which should make the word "Provisions" in the statute of Edward III. mean *victuals;* or as that which would make regeneration consist in being born of

"water and of wind;" or as that which would make the peculiar infidelity of the Sadducees consist in denying that there is any "*rising up*," or "*messenger*," or "*wind*."

I might rest the debate here. But I think Carson has even failed to make out his case from the Greek classics. He is to prove that *baptism* in these always means *immersion;* and such an immersion as to have the whole body covered with water. But take two or three of his examples; take them in course and almost at random on pp. 83, 84, of his work.

"*Polybius* applies the word to soldiers passing through water, BAPTIZED up to the middle." Here surely, they were *wet* with the water; but, it seems to me, not "*immersed*" in it; not "*buried*" in the waters, according to the favorite figure of our Baptist brethren.

Take his next example. "*Plutarch*, speaking of a Roman General dying of his wounds, says that (βαπτισας) *having* BAPTIZED his hand in blood, he wrote the inscription for a trophy." "Here," says Carson, "the mode cannot be questioned." "The instrument of writing is *dipped* in the coloring

fluid." Suppose we grant it. My *pen* is the instrument of writing, and I *dip* it in the ink when I write ; surely I NEVER *immerse* it in ink when I write ! When will our Baptist brethren cease this play upon the word *dipping* when they are to prove a total immersion !

Again, says Carson, (p. 84), " The sinner is represented by Porphyry as *baptized* up to his head in Styx, a celebrated river in hell';" and adds, "Is there any question about the mode of this baptism ?" I reply, No, surely there is not. He is not *immersed*, he is not *buried* in the water.

Again, he says, (p. 83,) "*Strabo* applies the word to Alexander's soldiers marching a whole day through the tide between the mountain Climax and the sea, *baptized* up to the middle. Surely," says Carson, "this was immersion." If it was, I reply, then when our Baptist ministers *wade* out into the river with their candidates, then *both* the minister and the candidate are *immersed* without being put under water at all ; and a *burying* in the water is not necessary to baptism. Certainly, the classic Strabo being witness, there may be a baptism without

putting the body under water. Here is not even a *dipping*, or a *plunging*, or an *overwhelming*, or a *burying ;* the soldiers wade into the water and so are baptized! And yet, upon such a basis, Carson settles the question, that baptism necessarily implies putting the subject wholly under water! for no less a conclusion than this meets the point which he is to establish. His ancient classics fail him ; and we have seen that if they did not, their entire agreement, in using the word to denote only an immersion, would by no means settle the question. We must go to the New Testament. We must learn the sacred use of the term. We must learn what Evangelists and Apostles deemed essential to baptism ; and if we make any thing essential which they did not, we are found guilty of adding to the word of God.

II.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

SPRINKLING AND POURING, SCRIPTURAL MODES.

MATTHEW, XXVIII. 9.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

So far, we have been occupied in discussing the principles of interpretation to be applied or admitted in determining what it is to baptize; and in making an application of these principles to the mode of argumentation adopted by our Baptist brethren.

I now proceed to the three inquiries laid down as the plan of my argument in the preceding discourse.

1. *What would the immediate disciples of our Lord understand from the simple face of the command* "BAPTIZE?"

2. Is there satisfactory evidence that they always administered the ordinance by immersion?

3. On the supposition that they did so, is there evidence that they considered that one mode essential?

1. *What would the immediate disciples of Christ understand from the simple face of the command* "Baptize?"

In Heb. ix. 10, we read of a ritual service "which stood only in meats and drinks, and *divers* washings." In the original, it is (διαφοροις βαπτισμοις,) "Divers baptisms."

So, according to Paul, there were "*baptisms*" under the Old Testament dispensation; and they are alike wrong, who say that there was no baptism before John,*

* We are often quoted as though we held that John's baptism was "*from men*;" and long arguments full of emotion at such a flagrant contradiction of our Savior are held, to prove that John's baptism was *not* from men. We never doubted, that John's baptism was not from men. And yet the word *baptize*, and the thing *baptize*, so far as the outward act is concerned, were in common use long before John; as Paul here witnesses. The *authority* for baptizing with the "*baptism unto repentance*," John had from heaven; the *design* and *import* of that baptism were from hea-

and they who cut the Bible in two, and throw away the Old Testament, when they go to learn what the word baptism means.

Paul contrasts this dispensation with that of which Christ is High Priest. He has told in what the first dispensation stood, and he goes on to say in what the new dispensation does not stand. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by *his own blood*."——"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of *the flesh*, how much more shall the blood of Christ——purge *your conscience*." He specifies here what "*washings*" (BAPTISMS,) or *purifyings*, he speaks of; and the only ones which he specifies, are those performed with "*blood*," and with the "ashes of a heifer SPRINKLING the unclean." The persons and things purified were never *immersed* in blood,

ven, *new* and specially given to *John*. But the *act* was not then first practiced. A *new use* was made of an *old thing*. The *design*, and *import*, and *use*, were the *substance* of the baptism; the *mode* was a trifle. The mind of our Savior, as well as the minds of his hearers, fastened upon these,—the *design*, *meaning*, and *use* of the baptism,—when he asked, "The baptism of John, was it from Heaven, or of men?"

they were *sprinkled;* and these sprinklings Paul here calls *baptisms.* It should be noticed too that as the *sprinkling* of the blood of bulls, and of the ashes of a heifer sanctified to the purifying of the *flesh,*" so the application of the "*blood of Christ,*" which purgeth "the *conscience,*" is repeatedly called the "SPRINKLING" (never the immersing) "*of the blood of Christ.*"

The "PURIFYING OF THE FLESH" by the ashes of a heifer, to which Paul here refers, is prescribed in Numbers xix. 17, 18. "And for an unclean person, they shall take of the ashes of a burnt heifer of *purification for sin,* and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel, *and a clean person* shall SPRINKLE it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave."

It is added, that on the seventh day "he shall *bathe himself;*" and our Baptist brethren are fond of saying that the "Baptism refers to the bathing." I am glad of the objection, because it distinctly recognizes the fact that Paul refers to these purifyings as among his "DIVERS BAPTISMS." But the

objection is idle; as Paul *does not specify the bathing* as any part of what he means; but he does specify the "*sprinkling*." He does not say that the *bathing** "sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh," but he says it is "The *blood* of bulls and goats, and the *ashes* of the heifer SPRINKLING the unclean, that sanctifieth." It is what is done by *another* hand, (for a "*clean person*" must sprinkle the unclean,) on which Paul's mind fastens as the baptism; and he does not deem it necessary to specify any thing else. And this application of *blood*, which was made by *sprinkling*, and the ashes of a heifer *sprinkling* the unclean, Paul calls a *baptism*.

The current of his discourse leads him on to speak of another of the "*divers* baptisms," in v. 15, and onward. Having made a comparison between the "*purifying of the flesh*," by the sprinkling of blood, and of the ashes of a heifer, and the "*purging of the conscience*," by the "sprinkling of the blood of Christ," he runs out the same parallel between the ritual of establishing the

* If he did, the word *bathing* would not necessarily imply an immersion. *Bathing* here is synonymous with *washing*.

first testament under Moses, and the ritual of establishing the second under Christ. It is worthy of remark that the same form of ritual is still kept up; it is still a sprinkling, and not an immersion. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took of the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled* the book and all the people. Moreover, he *sprinkled* likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry." The argument is, that Christ, in ratifying the new covenant, must ratify it with his own blood; and the only *modal* application of this blood spoken of even in figure, is the "*sprinkling* of the blood of Christ." The current of his discourse, and the contrast which runs throughout his argument, shows that the "*divers baptisms*" are still referred to in these *purifyings* so repeatedly described under the mode of *sprinkling*.

He speaks of "*divers* baptisms." Another of these is mentioned in Numb. viii. 7: "And this shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them," (viz. the Levites, to prepare them to enter upon the functions of their

office,) "*sprinkle* water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean." Note here, that no man inducts himself into the priesthood, and all that was done to the Levite by *another's* hand was the *sprinkling*." The Leper was in like manner to be cleansed by *sprinkling*, Lev. xiv. 7. And so pre-eminently is the sprinkling considered as the important element in the cleansing, that this *alone* is the outward part of the ritual pitched upon to designate the purifying with which Christ washes away the sins, and cleanses away the pollution of the soul. Thus, Isaiah lii. 15, "So shall he *sprinkle* many nations." Heb. xii. 24, "And *sprinkling* of the blood of Christ." I. Pet. i. 2, "And *sprinkling* of the blood of Christ." You never read of his "*Immersing* many nations," nor of the "*Immersion* of the blood of Christ;" no never, in the word of God.

But the IMPORT of *baptism* by water is this same cleansing away of sin by the blood of Christ. The washing away of sin is effected —not by the water—but by the blood of Christ. Baptism by water *signifies* this washing away of sins. Thus, "Arise and

be baptized, *and wash away thy sins.*"* Now if the application of the *sign* is to resemble the application of the *thing* which performs the real cleansing, and to resemble it even in figure: if the *type* is to resemble the *antitype;* the *shadow* the *substance;* then as it is the *sprinkling of the blood* of Christ that DOES the cleansing, surely it should be the *sprinkling* of the water in baptism that SIGNIFIES the cleansing; *immersion* would spoil the resemblance, and mar the significance of the sign.

But not to come at the conclusion too soon, let us hold here upon the testimony of the facts so far considered. We have here, then, "DIVERS BAPTISMS" *performed by* SPRINKLING.

Turn now to Mark vii. 3, 4—"For the Pharisees, *and all the Jews,* except they wash their hands oft, eat not; holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come

* There is a curious mode of setting aside this argument, by considering baptism as designed to represent the *burial* and *resurrection* of Christ! The word of God gives quite another view of the import of baptism; see Acts ii. 38, and xxii. 16.

from the market,* except they WASH, they eat not; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the WASHING of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables."

The words "*wash*," and "*washing*" are, in the original (βαπτισωνται,) except they HAVE BAPTIZED THEMSELVES; and (βαπτισμους,) "BAPTISMS."

See how this subject is introduced. "And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with *defiled* (that is to say, with *unwashen*) hands, they found fault." Then follows the explanation: "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not; and when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not." "Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders,† but eat bread

* *Rosenmüller* says, "The sense is, 'when they come from the market, (i. e. *any public place*,) they do not take their food except *they wash their hands*.' Αγορα (the market) signifies not only a concourse of men, or place of public resort, in which provisions are sold, and in which trials are held, but all similar public places." Αγορα—*public* places, opposed to private dwellings."

† "The rule of the rabbins was, that if they washed

with *unwashen hands?*" Compare this with Luke xi. 38. A Pharisee marvelled that the Lord Jesus "had not first *washed* before dinner," (original, εβαπτισθη); that "he had not first BEEN BAPTIZED before dinner." The fault of the Lord Jesus and of the disciples, in the eyes of the Jews was, that they had not first *been* BAPTIZED (or *baptized themselves*) before eating; *i. e.*, they had eaten with UNWASHEN HANDS. The washing of the hands, therefore, was a *baptism;* and,—as the form of the original language, as well as our translation, shows,—a baptism of the PERSONS, not simply of the hands; *i. e.*, THEY (the persons) were baptized when their *hands* had been washed for a ceremonial purifying.

There is this further peculiarity about it; their hands were not commonly *dipped* or *immersed*, but washed in *running* water, as

their hands well in the morning, the first thing they did, it would serve for all day, *provided they kept alone;* but *if they went into company*, they must not, at their return, either eat or pray, till they had washed their hands."—*Matthew Henry*, on Mark vii. 4.

See also *Maimonides*, cited in Scott's comment on this place, to the same effect.

streaming from a pitcher or from a watering pot.*

I am aware that attempts have been made to set aside the force of these passages, in Mark vii. and Luke xi. But these attempts have done no more than to demonstrate the strength of our position. There are only two possible grounds of resisting the conclusion. One of which is, that the baptism is predicated of the *hands*, as though the *hands* were immersed; and the other, that while the Jews on many occasions WASHED *their hands*, yet as often as they *came from the market*, they IMMERSED their whole bodies.

* A very worthy minister of the Episcopal church, who had traveled much, and spent considerable time in the East, (formerly Rector of St. Paul's Church in this place,) assured me that the practice is continued in the Eastern world to this day. Before meals, a servant comes round with a pitcher, and *pours* water on the hands of those about to eat, or they are otherwise cleansed with *running* or *streaming* water. He said, as often as he saw it done, it brought to his mind the passage in II. Kings iii. 11. "Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who *poured water* on the hands of Elijah," i. e. who was *servant* to him: the very common *duty* of a servant is used as an appellation to designate the *relation* of servant.

As was noticed in the previous discourse, Dr. Campbell takes the first ground, and Mr. Carson, the second; and while these two great men measure swords, and mutually overthrow each other's position, the truth comes out from between them unscathed. Campbell, appearing to know full well the absurdity of supposing that "*all the Jews*" always "immersed" themselves as often as they came from the market before eating, referred the baptism to the *hands*, and maintained an *immersion*, but an immersion of the hands only. Carson, (p. 101,) replies, that he considers Campbell's view of the matter as "nothing but an ingenious device, without any authority from the practice of the language." Such it most undoubtedly is. No scholar could ever have been betrayed into such a "device," save from the hard necessity of making out an "*immersion*" in this case, by some means or other. Carson, on the other hand, maintains that we are taught here, that "all the Jews," whenever they have been at the market, never eat *except they have immersed the whole body.* What does he bring to prove it? The word *baptize!* Baptize means immerse:

therefore they were immersed, the Holy Spirit being witness! But the very question is, *whether* baptize means immerse. The Holy Spirit has said they were *baptized*, and has so explained it as to leave us to understand that they were baptized (ceremonially purified,) by *washing their hands*. The Holy Spirit has said that they were baptized, but the Spirit has not told us that by *baptize*, he means *immerse*. What was the *fact*? Did the Jews always immerse themselves as often as they came from the market?* To me it appears clear that the Holy Spirit has explained what the fact was; they *washed their hands*. And what does Mr. Carson bring to show that they always immersed their whole bodies as often as they came from the market? Nothing but this idle begging of the question concerning the word baptize. There is not a scrap of evidence in any thing else in the wide world to show it.† The manners and customs of

* *Kuinoel* declares it to be improbable, and maintains that it cannot be proved by sufficient arguments that they had such a custom.

† "There is no evidence that the Jews washed their whole bodies every time they came from the market." —*Barnes.*

the Jews were well known. They have been well known since throughout the four quarters of the globe, wherever their nation has been scattered and peeled; the *washing of the hands* still exists; but nothing—no nothing from all history has been adduced to show that they observe, or ever have observed the custom which Mr. Carson here attributes to them. Nothing—no nothing, but this idle begging of the question has been alleged and substantiated, or can be. But all this matters nothing to Mr. Carson! High, low, rich, poor; at home and abroad; winter or summer; all are conveniently furnished with *baths*, or with something else, where they may conveniently *immerse* themselves before eating, as often as they have been at the market! It matters nothing that these things were never heard of; "baptize means immerse," and therefore it must be so. It matters not, that "*According to the manner of purifying of the Jews*," there were set, not "*baths*," but "*water-pots;*" and that those used at the marriage supper in Cana, when they would seem to need "much water" if ever, contained about "*two or three firkins a-piece*," (somewhat

over half a barrel, according to the largest computation,) large enough, it should seem, to purify a whole company of guests, but of questionable capacity for a single immersion. No; no matter for difficulties. No, says Carson, (p. 100,) "*Even an inexplicable difficulty* would not affect the certainty of my conclusions." But enough; I think you will conclude with me, that here is sufficient proof, that Mark, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, teaches us that the word "*baptism*" was used to denote (among other things) a *ritual washing of the hands*. Of course, the immersion of the whole body is in no way essential to a baptism.

To my mind, here is, so far, *demonstration;* —proof which puts it beyond my power to doubt,—that *sprinkling* and *pouring* are SCRIPTURAL MODES OF BAPTISM. Whether the mode of immersion has a scriptural recognition is a matter that is yet to appear. It is certain, without going farther, that IMMERSION CANNOT BE ESSENTIAL TO BAPTISM.

Let us come now to the use of the word baptize with reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, Acts i. 3, "John truly *baptized* with water, but ye shall be

baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." I will not stop to show how grossly this would sound to alter it, according to the proposal of our Baptist brethren, so as to read "But ye shall be *immersed* with (or in) the Holy Ghost."

This baptism was accomplished on the day of Pentecost. Peter said of it, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days,—I will *pour out* my Spirit *upon* all flesh."—"He (Jesus) hath *shed forth* this;" so, Acts xi. 15, 16, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost *fell* on them, as *on us* at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with *water*, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." The mode of the baptism here spoken of, is under the figure of *pouring* and *shedding forth*. The gift of the Spirit is never spoken of under the figure of immersion, but as a pouring, shedding forth, sprinkling, coming down like rain. Thus, Isaiah xliv. 3, "I will *pour out* my Spirit *upon* thy seed." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, "Then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: a new

heart also will I give you." Compare Tit. iii. 5, 6, "By the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is *shed on us* abundantly;" Ps. lxii. 6, "He shall come down upon the mown grass as *showers* that water the earth;" Isaiah lii. 15, "So shall he *sprinkle* many nations."

It has been argued that the baptizing was still by immersion, as the Spirit was shed down "*abundantly*," and "*filled the room.*" The Scripture says "the *sound*" filled the room. It is not so gross as to speak of the Holy Spirit filling a room like a material substance, and thus *immersing* people. Besides, though you might *cover* people by pouring water on them, provided they were enclosed in a room or vessel, you could not be said to "dip" or "plunge" them in so doing; but *immersion* (and it is contended that the baptism of the Holy Ghost shall be called the "*immersion*" of the Holy Ghost;) *immersion* has the act of dipping entering necessarily into its idea, as well as the act of covering. Moreover, *all* converted persons are *baptized* with the Holy Ghost. Paul says, 1 Cor. xii. 13, "For *by one Spirit* are we *all baptized* into one body, whether

we be Jew or Gentile, bond or free." But who will pretend that all converted persons are "immersed" into the Holy Ghost, according to the manner in which, (it is argued,) the apostles were immersed on the day of Pentecost, by *pouring* the Spirit upon them till it *filled the room*, and so immersed them?

But Carson insists still, that there was a *real* immersion here; not with the Spirit, but with the *emblems* of the Spirit. The answer has already been given. Christ did not say ye shall be baptized with the *emblems* of the Spirit. He said, "Ye shall be baptized *with the* HOLY GHOST;" with the Spirit itself, not with the emblems.

Here I rest under this topic. The *mode* of baptism in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as that mode is indicated by the uniform figure, is *pouring*, *shedding forth*, *sprinkling*, coming down *like rain*, or like *showers*, *falling upon*. I cannot but wonder that those who insist so much upon the words, "*buried with him in baptism*," are not able to see in these also an equal authority for proper modes of baptism; even granting (what I do not grant) that their favorite phrase has some reference to a *mode* of baptism.

Having traced the meaning of the word "baptize," so far in the Scriptures, turn to the early Christian Fathers, whose views of what is essential to baptism were moulded on the meaning of the term common among Christians and Jews. The following examples, with several others, are adduced by *Dr. Pond.** "TERTULLIAN speaks of baptism being administered by *sprinkling*. 'Who will accommodate you, a man so little to be trusted, (asperginem unam aquæ) with one *sprinkling of water*.'

"ORIGEN represents the wood on the altar, over which water was *poured* at the command of Elijah, (1 Kings xviii. 33,) as having been *baptized*.

"LACTANTIUS says that Christ received baptism, 'that he might save the Gentiles by *baptism*,' that is (purifici roris perfusione) by the *distilling of the purifying dew*.

"CYPRIAN, JEROME, and some others of the Fathers, understood the prediction, 'I will *sprinkle* clean water upon you,' Ezek. xxxvi. 25, as having reference to water baptism.

* See p. 33, 34, of his excellent work on Baptism.

"CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, speaking of a backslider, whom John was the means of reclaiming, says, 'He was baptized a second time *with tears*.'

"ATHANASIUS reckons up eight several 'baptisms,' and the sixth in his enumeration is that '*of tears*.'

"GREGORY NAZIANZEN says, 'I know of a fourth baptism, that by martyrdom and *blood;* and I know of a fifth, that of *tears*.' The baptism of tears and blood was a favorite phraseology with the early Christians."

Now in all these *baptisms*, of the "wood and the altar," of "*tears*," and "*blood*," the idea of "dipping," "plunging," "burying," or "immersing," is excluded. "Wet," "washed," "sprinkled," "poured upon," those spoken of here as baptized might be; but whether men may be *dipped* or *immersed* in their own tears or blood, admits of a question. If it be said that these representations are figurative, certainly there is no *immersion* about them, even in figure.

The conclusion is, that the early fathers as well as the Apostles, understood the word "*baptize*" in quite another sense than that of *immerse*. Their idea of baptism was

that of a *purifying* (or consecrating) by *sprinkling* or *pouring*, and these are the *modes* under which is constantly represented the purifying (the baptism) of the Holy Ghost.

I have now done with the argument under the first head, and we are ready for the question, *What would the immediate disciples of our Lord understand from the simple face of the command* BAPTIZE? Would they consider *immersion* as ESSENTIAL? I think the conclusion is inevitable; IT IS IMPOSSIBLE. *Sprinkling* and *pouring* they would inevitably consider lawful and proper modes; and so far, it has not appeared that they have any notion of immersing at all: or any authority for it, if direct authority be sought for a specific mode.

I have done with the argument from the meaning of the word; and proceed to the second inquiry.

2. "*Is there satisfactory evidence that the disciples of Christ always administered baptism by immersion.* I say *always;* for if they did not *always* do so, immersion cannot be essential, even though it could be proved (which it cannot be,) that immersion was the common mode.

John was baptizing in Enon, "*because there was much water there.*" It is contended that the "*much water*" could be needed only for immersion, and that therefore John baptized by immersion.

It is not a little remarkable that they who print this in capitals to prove that John baptized by immersion, presently find water enough in Jerusalem to baptize three thousand in a small part of one day. They are fond of asking, "WHY DID HE GO TO THE RIVER?" They dwell much upon "FOLLOWING THE SAVIOR DOWN THE BANKS OF JORDAN;" and upon "GOING TO THE RIVER." But though Jordan was at hand, we read no more about the disciples going "to the river." We hear nothing said by the Apostles about following the Savior down the banks of Jordan. They baptize wherever they may happen to be; and are never at a loss, or compelled to remove to another place for the purpose of finding "*much water.*" It does not appear that they ever think it needs much water for baptism. It seems strange, therefore, that John went to *Enon* to find much water for the mere purpose of baptizing.

John preached "*in the wilderness*," (Matt. iii.) It is said, Mark i. 4, "John *did* BAPTIZE in the WILDERNESS." It is said that "Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about went out to John." Such multitudes would need "*much water*" for other purposes than immersion; and John must needs resort to a place where much water might be found to furnish those multitudes in the wilderness with drink, unless indeed he could work a miracle, and we read that "John did no miracle." This may seem, at first view, a little matter to us, in this land of wells, and brooks, and springs; but all who are familiar with travels in the East, know how important a considerable caravan finds it to get near a good watering place for an encampment, even for a single night.

Now what was this "Wilderness of Judea?" Take the map, and look eastward from Jerusalem and Judea to Jordan, to the region lying between these, and from the Dead Sea up to what is supposed to be Enon. You have embraced the location of the wilderness of Judea. And what is this wilderness? An American lady, (Mrs.

Haight,) who traveled up this region from Jericho a short time since, thus describes her journey in Vol. 2, p. 131 of her travels. "Our course lay due north, up the valley of the Jordan. We *replenished our water-bottles* (bags), as we were warned that we should find no more until afternoon. At this spot we left all signs of cultivation; the plain was afterward *one entire desert*, during the whole day's ride of twenty-five miles. The soil was a compact gravel or as geologists call it, a "hard pan," partially covered with a short dry grass, the result of the winter rains, which withers up the moment their influence is past. Not a single object or incident occurred during this most tedious and painful day of all my life. This was the first time since we left Beyroot that we had suffered any length of time for want of water. By nine o'clock the intense heat of the sun made the water in the leather bottles so warm that we could not drink it. Extreme thirst obliged us merely to moisten our parched tongues."*

Josephus bears the same testimony of this wilderness.† "The whole plain," says he,

* N. Y. Observer, April 11, 1840. † Ibid.

"is *destitute of water*, except the Jordan." In another place he says, that "The Jordan, dividing the lake of Gennesareth in the midst, passes through an *extensive desert* in to the Dead Sea." Eusebius* speaks more than once of the *Desert of the Jordan.*

In this wilderness John was preaching and baptizing. There seems here reason enough why, being in the wilderness, he should "GO TO THE RIVER" even if it were not to immerse; and reason enough why he should resort to Enon for much water, even for other purposes than immersion. The immense multitudes would need water for drink; or if they had prudently brought a supply in their leathern bags, John might still have preferred the waters of the *river* for the purpose of purifying; and the traveler "Sandys† says, that at *Enon* are little SPRINGS gushing out, whose waters are soon absorbed by the sands." Could not these springs, with their streams, have been the (πολλα υδατα,) "*many waters*," for the sake of which John resorted to Enon; for it cannot be supposed but that there was as *much* water" any where along the stream of Jor-

* Ibid. † Hamilton on Baptism, p. 92.

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dan as opposite to Enon; and to find much water *in Jordan* could be no reason for going to *Enon* more than for "going to the river" at any other spot? We read no more of "going to the river," or of going to any spot to find much water for the *purpose of baptizing*. I leave it, therefore, for you to judge, whether the argument for immersion from going "to the river," and from going to Enon, because there was "much water there," does not dissipate and scatter away like the mists before the sun and wind. So falls another pillar of the immersion scheme at the slightest touch of investigation, and before the slightest test of truth.

"But Jesus *came up straightway out of the water.*" The argument drawn from this is distinct from that of going to the river, and from the "much water" at Enon. It therefore merits a distinct examination.

Did Jesus *emerge* from *beneath* the surface of the water; or did he simply *go* up out of the water, or *from* the water? The original language here, is such as can have no reference to *emerging* from under water. The Greek is αναβαινων απο του ὑδατος,—"*going up out of* (*or from*) *the water.*" The verb

and the preposition both forbid the idea of emerging from under water. To express this both should have been changed, and the Greek is supplied with words to express the idea exactly. And Carson, who is a profound Greek scholar, and never admits against his scheme any thing that he is not compelled to admit, says, (p. 200), "I admit the proper translation of απο (apo) is *from*, not *out of*. I perfectly agree with Mr. Ewing hat απο (the word here translated '*out of*,') would have its meaning fully verified, if they had *only gone down* TO THE EDGE *of the water*." But, says he, "My argument is this. If baptism had not been by immersion, there can be no adequate cause alleged *for going to the river*. Can sober judgment, can candor suppose, that if a handful of water would have sufficed for baptism, they would have *gone to the river?*"

I trust I have your judgment decisively given on the subject of "going to the river:" and the other part, that of "coming out of the water," Mr. Carson has formally given up. So in neither case is there the shadow of a proof, or of a presumption that the baptism was performed by immersion. Going

into the water, (even if we admit that the Savior went further than "the *edge* of the water,") and coming up *out of* the water, does not necessarily imply that one has been *under* water, or that he has been in knee-deep. How much less can a simple going up *from* the water, when it is not certain that one has been *into* the water at all, necessarily imply that he has been *under* water? How idle to rely upon this to prove it.

If the mode of John's baptism was by sprinkling or pouring, then he could well baptize in his short ministry the crowds of people described as "Jerusalem and all Judea, and the region round about." If not, calculations have been made on reasonable data which seem to render their immersion physically impossible.

But there is another reason for supposing that Jesus was baptized in a mode other than immersion; and in the absence of all good reason for supposing that he was immersed, this reason is entitled to some weight. Why was he baptized? Not to wash away sins, for he had none; not unto repentance, for he needed it-not. John therefore forbade him. He knew that the

ordinary design and import of his baptism were inapplicable to that holy being Jesus Christ. Why then was Jesus baptized? He answered himself: "For so it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." But as this could have no reference to repentance or remission of sins, we look for the reference in another quarter; to wit, the righteousness required in the law. The law required those who were about to enter upon the priesthood to be purified; thus, Ex. xxix. 4, "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt *wash them with water*." Numbers viii. 7, shows how this washing was to performed; "And thus shalt thou do unto them to *cleanse* them; SPRINKLE *water of purifying upon them*." Jesus therefore "began to be about *thirty years old*," the age at which the Levites were to enter upon the priesthood. He was of the tribe of Judah, "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Heb. vii. 14. "Yet he was to be a priest, on special appointment of God." Heb. vii. 17–28. "Now no man taketh this honor to himself." Heb. v. 4. To fulfil therefore the

righteousness of the law, he went to John, his "messenger" sent "before his face," to show him unto Israel. He went at thirty years old, not before. He went to enter upon his priesthood; and was purified by his special forerunner, to fulfil "all the righteousness of the law." But this purification for the priesthood according to the law, was performed not by immersion, but by sprinkling. I see little reason for a doubt that Jesus Christ was baptized by sprinkling.

Take now the baptism of the Eunuch. Acts viii. 38, 39. "*And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him.* And when they were come *up out of the water*, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."

On this Mr. Carson says, (p. 203,) "The man who can read it, and not see immersion in it, must have in his mind something unfavorable to the investigation of truth. As long as I fear God, I cannot, for all the kingdoms of the world, resist the evidence of this single document. Nay, had I *no* conscience, I could not as a scholar attempt to expel *immersion* from this account. All the ingenuity of all the critics in Europe cannot

expel immersion from this account. Amidst the most violent perversion that it can sustain on the rack, it will still cry out *immersion*, IMMERSION." The fact, that in a work in which he goes over the whole field of debate, and discusses the meaning of baptize from old Homer to the end of Greek; the fact that in such a work, consisting of 274 pages, on the *mode* of baptism, he spends 24 pages upon this single passage of Philip and the Eunuch, shows of how much importance he makes it; and indeed we are ready to suspect, from his spending so much labor on so very plain a case, that he found it not very easy to make a clear immersion out of it after all.

I profess I see no immersion in the account. Whence is the immersion inferred? From the fact that the Eunuch *went into the* water, and came *up out of the* water? But they went down "*both*" into the water, and "*they*" (both) came up out of the water. If going into the water, and coming up out of the water proves an immersion, it proves that Philip was immersed as well as the Eunuch: and what thus proves too much, (proves what is not true,) proves nothing.

Is it proved from the fact that the Eunuch was *baptized*? What that baptizing was, is the question. I have proved that people and things were often *baptized* when they were not immersed, but only sprinkled or poured upon. The baptism proves no immersion.

Precisely the same words might have been used in the narrative, had they come to a stream not ankle-deep, and gone down both into* the water; and if Philip, having no convenient basin or dish, had dipped his hand in the water, and poured or sprinkled it upon the Eunuch; and if then they had both come up out of the water. Who will prove to me that this stream was a foot deep? Who will prove it a stream at all? Who will *prove* the quantity of water there was

* It is not certain that they went further than *to* the water. To make the Greek εις necessarily mean INTO, would make Jesus come *into* Jerusalem, when he was as far off as "Bethphage and the Mount of Olives," Matth. xxi. 1. It would make our Lord command Peter go *into* the sea, when he was only to go *to* the sea, Matth. xvii. 27, and Peter must needs have thrown *himself into* the sea after the fish, instead of casting his hook in. These are but specimens of numerous similar absurdities.

sufficient to render an immersion possible? If it was, who will prove that the Eunuch was immersed? I see no proof of immersion here. The only *show* of proof is by begging the question, and taking the very thing *to be* proved, for granted.

On the other hand, there is some probability, (aside from the fact that baptism was commonly performed by sprinkling or pouring), to suppose that the Eunuch was baptized by sprinkling. He was reading the passage in Isaiah liii. 7, which he did not understand. Philip began "at the beginning"—viz., at the beginning of that prophecy concerning Christ (for the book was not divided into chapters and verses,) and that was at the 52d Chap. v. 13,—"Behold my servant." Beginning here, Philip expounded the Scripture. He must needs have read and expounded those remarkable words in v. 15, "*So shall he* SPRINKLE *many nations*," How sprinkle? By purifying:—an inward purifying by his Spirit; and a purifying by his blood; by the "*sprinkling* of the blood of Christ;" and by the *Baptism* of the Holy Ghost. The outward sign of these inward and spiritual things is the outward

purification by *sprinkling*. Now the explanation of this passage would most naturally lead to the conversation about *baptism:* the outward baptism by *water*. Baptism is the only ritual application of water under the Christian dispensation; and the only figure chosen to represent the spiritual cleansing by Christ is *sprinkling*. This is the only use of water foretold by the prophets even in figure. Is it improbable that the exposition of this passage led to the conversation about baptism? And when they casually came to water, the Eunuch said, "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" In the absence of all proof to the contrary, this incident goes to render it probable that the Eunuch was baptized by sprinkling; and these two probabilities concerning the baptism of the Savior and of the Eunuch, strengthened by numerous probabilities of the same kind, which are yet to be mentioned, go to corroborate each other.

Two other expressions are much relied on as proof of the mode of baptism: those in Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 12. In these, believers are said to be baptized into the "death" of Jesus Christ: and "*buried with*

him by baptism into death." The language is figurative. There is just as much reason to argue from them that believers are literally *put to death* in baptism as that they are literally *buried under water* in baptism: nay, the dying is the thing more insisted on, and indeed the principal idea; the one on which the whole force of the passage turns. They are buried with him by baptism "*into death.*" They are "planted together, in the likeness,"—(not of his grave or burial) but in the likeness *of his death.* They are "*crucified* with him." They are "*baptized*" —not into his grave or burial, but "into his *death.*" If we are to infer the *mode* of baptism from these figures, the evidence is strongest for drawing a resemblance for the mode of baptism from hanging on the cross: for that was the *mode* of his dying: and the passage says we are "*crucified* with him." But the reference here is not to the *mode*, though the words furnish a happy sound for our Baptist brethren to play upon. The argument is,—"We are *dead* with Christ, and we must no more live to sin than a dead body must live. We are dead; and more— we are buried; as we often say to express

strongly the fact that a person has ceased from living, "He is *dead* and *buried*." The burying is the conclusive token of his being dead: so the baptism is a token—not of the burying—but of the *death*,—we are *buried* "INTO DEATH;" we are "Baptized INTO HIS DEATH." It is not the *mode* of the baptism that is referred to, but the EFFECT of the baptism:—"Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed:" "that henceforth we should not serve sin:" "that henceforth we should be *dead* to sin." I confess I see no manner of force in the argument drawn from the passage in favor of immersion. The argument being from the *effect* of baptism rather than from its mode, both the language and the argument are equally appropriate, whatever the mode.

In 1 Cor. x. 2, the apostle says, "The Israelites were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Apparently, from the quantity of water in the vicinity, this passage as well as that in 1 Pet. iii. 21, concerning the "Eight souls saved by water: the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us,"—has been claimed as proving im-

mersion. Surely there was water enough in the Red Sea to immerse the Israelites; and water enough in the Deluge to immerse the world, and *literally* to "bury it *into death*." But it seems to be forgotten that the "eight souls saved by water" were *in the ark*, and neither drowned nor immersed at all: and that the Israelites who were baptized unto Moses *walked on dry land*. They suffered no immersion, unless one may be immersed on dry land. If they were wet at all, it was by the spray of the sea, and by the rain that dropped from the clouds: as in Ps. lxxvii.—"Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron:"—"The waters saw thee, O God: the waters saw thee; they *were afraid:* the *depths also were troubled:* the clouds *poured out water*." If there is any *mode* of baptism here, it is a *sprinkling*, or such a *pouring out* of water as falls in drops. A *baptism* there was: an *immersion* there *was not*.

The instances so far considered are the ones relied on, to prove that immersion was the mode of baptism, and the only one practised by the immediate disciples of Christ. I think I have shown that they

prove no such thing: that they afford scarcely the faintest shadow of it: but that, on the contrary, the probability is all in favor of a baptism by pouring or sprinkling.

In the remaining instances the advocates of immersion are compelled to take the laboring oar, and render that certain or probable, which on the face of it seems impossible.

On the day of *Pentecost*, (" the feast of weeks, of the first fruits of *wheat harvest*, and the feast of *ingathering at the year's end*"—Exod. xxxiv. 22,) the season when the brook Kidron was dry, and when, " save the pool of Siloam, no living fountain gladdened the city," three thousand were baptized in a small part of one day. Now what do those who make John take Jerusalem and Judea out to Enon to immerse them because there is much water there? All at once, and very conveniently, there are discovered a number of *reservoirs* and *baths*. But it is forgotten that these can belong only to the rich; and not many rich or mighty were in the habit of befriending the followers of Christ; and the great mass of the converts appear to be strangers at Jerusalem. Not the least

intimation is found that such bathing places were resorted to. And a simple mathematical calculation will show that the eleven apostles could hardly have immersed three thousand persons in so short a time. All these circumstances show a high degree of probability, that there was no immersion here.

The Jailer (Acts xvi. 19-30) was baptized in the night, and it should seem in prison. But it is urged there might be a bath there: and long arguments are held to show that the prison *might* have been furnished with a bath, in which the Jailer *might* have been immersed. Surely, surely, that is a happy facility of discovery, which after making it necessary for all Judea to go out to *Jordan* to find water enough to be baptized; and to go to a *particular point* on Jordan,—to Enon, because there is much water there;—can presently find water enough any where and every where. If a bath should perchance be wanted, there is no difficulty: a stroke of the pen places it there; and a certain immersion is performed without a scrap of evidence in the history to show that an immersion was possible!

But this ground is now very generally given up, and a way for immersion is found out even without a bath in the prison. It is now maintained that they *went* FORTH; because he was brought *out* of the prison, and then *brought into the house;* and it is demanded, as an unanswerable argument, why he was taken abroad in the night, except for immersion; or why taken abroad at all, if he might be baptized by sprinkling within.

Now this is to give up the baptism in a bath within the prison; for I take it as a point not to be debated, that he was not baptized both *in* the prison and *out* of it, in one and the same baptism. But in letting the strong hold go, as they in justice should, have they found another where they may rest secure? I think not. The Jailer thrust them into the *inner* prison: then he brought them out of that into the more common part of the prison;—not out of doors abroad; for we see that he was ready to kill himself when he supposed the prisoners had escaped, even by means of an earthquake. In this prison proper the baptism was performed: then the Jailer brought

them into his *house;* i. e. into his dwelling apartments, doubtless attached to the prison. There was no going abroad at all. Paul would not go out upon leave, till the magistrates came and fetched him out. So, the bath is given up, and the substitute fails: and according to the proper rules of argument we should be entitled to have it granted, on their own ground,—that here was no immersion. Every expedient has failed, and we have, in all reason, a simple common baptism by sprinkling or pouring.

Paul's baptism is recorded in Acts ix. 17, 18. He was in his chamber, blind, and weak with fasting three days. "He arose (or stood up) and was baptized; *and when he had received meat he was strengthened.*" What pretence for a bath in this inner chamber? What is there to show that he went abroad in his blind and weak state, before he had received meat and was strengthened? I am unable even to conjecture what. It was, I think, beyond proper question, a baptism by sprinkling or pouring.

The baptism of Cornelius is recorded Acts x. 44. Those who heard Peter were first baptized with the Holy Ghost. "And

as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost *fell* on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost*." Acts xi. 15. He reasoned at the time thus: These have received the *Holy Ghost;* can any man forbid *water*? They have received the *greater* baptism, can any man forbid the *less:* they have the *reality*, can any man forbid the *sign*? His idea seems to be—not that they might be carried and *applied to the water;* but that *water might be brought* and applied to *them*. The Spirit's mode of baptizing was a falling upon, and such it seems clearly, was the probable application of the water here.

Here I rest under the second inquiry. Not only is there no evidence that the apostles always baptized by immersion, but clear evidence to the contrary: and, I add, *no* certain evidence that they immersed at all. The probability even so far as concerns this, is on the other side. I do profess myself unable, and my belief that all other men are unable, to make out a clear case of baptism by immersion in the New Testa-

ment.* And yet if twenty might be made out, it would not invalidate the argument, as I shall show under the third inquiry.

Previously to entering upon this, however, it seems desirable to say a word, in passing, on the argument FROM HISTORY. It is not indeed essential. I care not who gets the argument from history, provided I get the argument clear and decisive from the word of God.

That immersion was early and extensively practised is certain. That it was not considered essential is also certain.† The

* Rev. Wm. T. Hamilton in his work on baptism says, (p. 89), "*And I hesitate not to assert that no man can prove that either John or the Apostles baptized by immersion;*"—"and for any to *assume* that one mode only was employed, and then demand that all should comply with that mode, while they can produce neither express command nor an undeniable example of baptism by immersion in the Bible, is rather a bold stand to take; especially for those who insist that in a positive ordinance, the law of the ordinance must be our only guide."

† JUSTIN is relied on to prove that immersion only was practised in his day. But he uses such language as renders it CERTAIN that he by no means considered immersion essential; and such as renders it *doubtful* whether he meant immersion at all. Thus when he is

practice was never invariable. The sick and feeble were baptized by affusion or sprinkling; and baptism in such modes was distinctly recognized as valid in other cases.* Novatian was baptized by affusion

writing to the *Emperor* he *invariably* DESCRIBES the baptism, and does not use the word *baptize* at all. He describes the baptism by the words λουω (*louo*) "TO WASH," and λουτρον, WASHING. But these words referred to *no* particular MODE of applying water; least of all to an indispensable immersion; and if he thought immersion essential he wilfully misled the Emperor, who would of necessity understand that they were *washed* in any mode, and not necessarily immersed; but if in any specific mode,—by an application of water to the subject, not of the subject to the water.

It is further remarkable that when Justin writes to *Jews*, (in his *Dialogue with* TRYPHO,) he uses the words βαπτιζω (Baptizo,) and λουω (*louo*) indifferently, as being synonymous. *Clemens Alexandrinus* does the same, A. D. 190.

When the early fathers speak of baptism as a regeneration, they often cite Titus iii. 5, δια λουτρου, (loutron) the "WASHING of regeneration;" thus showing that they considered baptism as a WASHING (performed in any mode indifferently) and not as necessarily an IMMERSING. (See this point ably discussed in the "CHRONICLE OF THE CHURCH," May 25, and June 29, 1838; from which I derive these facts.)

* *Cyprian* says, "Sprinkling is of like value with

as he lay upon his bed in sickness. The Emperor Constantine was baptized by Eusebius, of Nicomedia, lying on his bed, clothed in white. Sixty or seventy years after the Apostles, a Jew while traveling with Christians fell sick and desired baptism. Not having water, they sprinkled him thrice with sand. "He recovered. His case was reported to the bishop, who decided that the man was baptized, if only he had water poured on him again."* LAURENTIUS is mentioned as baptizing two persons, Romanus and Lucilius, by *affusion*. "A little while before he suffered, he baptized one of his executioners with a *pitcher of water*."† Many such cases are all along incidentally recorded. Upon the best search that I can make, I am compelled to abide by the conclusion of Dr. Pond; who says, (p. 43,) "I propose it as an indubitable fact that immersion was *never considered essential* to baptism till the rise of the Anabaptists in Germany, in the sixteenth century."

the salutary bath, and where these things are done in the church, where the faith is sound of the giver and receiver, *all is valid*."

* In Pond, p. 45. † Ibid. p. 48.

History shows that Christians early laid an improper stress upon baptism, attributing to it an efficacy which by no means belongs to it. To the simple rite of baptism by sprinkling or affusion practised by the apostles, they soon added a more thorough washing with a greater quantity of water.* And this is scarce to be wondered at when we remember how Peter said, "Lord not my feet only, but my hands and my head." And yet our Savior did seem to caution his disciples against this tendency to overdo and overburden religious rites, when he replied, "He that is washed, needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The tendency was never to throw off any part of the ceremony but to add more. To immersion they soon added a *trine* immersion; exorcisms, (or expelling the devil from the candidate); putting salt on the tongue; anointing the eyes, ears, and mouth, with spittle; marking with the sign of the cross, clothing in a white robe, and anointing with

* Jerome speaks of a mode of baptism as common in the ancient church, which was not to dip the whole body, but a "*thrice dipping of the head.*" Augustine mentions the same. (Pond, p. 46.)

oil. They went further. Not content with being literally *buried* in the waters, they imbibed another notion from "putting off the old man," and also from the nakedness of Christ on the cross:—(for the same passage which speaks of being *buried* with Christ speaks of the old man being *crucified* with Christ:) and they baptized all *naked:* men, women, youths, children, all alike actually naked, divested of all clothing! Truly, "Baptisteries" were necessary at that period: and he would not be wide from the mark who should see here a reason for their invention, to remedy the indecencies of the scene; but from the beginning it was not so. For authority as to this fact I refer to Dr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism, and to Dr. Miller on Baptism, p. 105. Wall says, "The ancient Christians, when they were baptized by immersion, were all baptized naked, whether they were men, women, or children." Dr. Miller adds, "We have the same evidence (to wit, from history) in favor of immersing divested of all clothing, that we have for immersion at all," and that "so far as the *history* of the Church subsequent to the Apostolic age informs us, these must stand or fall together."

The argument from history, therefore, proves nothing pertinent to the determining of the question, or it proves altogether too much. It cannot weigh against the word of God, and the suitable exposition of the law of baptism as instituted by Christ.

But here justice requires that I go a little further. A tract entitled "A *Familiar Dialogue between Peter and Benjamin on the subject of communion*," has been extensively circulated here, and all around in the region, and, as appears, extensively through the country. On the first page of this tract we have the following sentence: "As late as 1643, in the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, sprinkling was substituted for immersion by a majority of ONE—25 voted for sprinkling, 24 for immersion. This small majority was obtained by the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in that Assembly."

Now all this is told for truth. It is told most circumstantially:—"in 1643"—"the Assembly of Divines,"—"majority of *one*,"—"24 for immersion,"—"25 for sprinkling,"—"by the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot."

Like other fictions, this fiction is founded

on fact, but it is not the truth. There was no question at all in the Assembly of Divines whether sprinkling was proper. That was in customary use, and allowed on all hands to be proper ; and the final vote of the Assembly in passing the "Directory for the worship of God," was passed, " with *great unanimity*," and that Directory has these words: " As he pronounceth these words he is to baptize the child with water, which, for the manner of doing it, is not only *lawful*, but sufficient, and most expedient, to be by *pouring* or *sprinkling* of the water on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony."

But what about the " majority of *one?*" Dr. Miller states the matter thus : " When the *committee* who had been charged with preparing a " Directory for the worship of God," brought in their *report*, they had spoken of baptism thus : " *It is lawful and sufficient to sprinkle the child.*" To this, Dr. Lightfoot, among others, objected, not because he doubted the entire sufficiency of sprinkling ; for he decidedly *preferred* sprinkling to immersion,—but because he thought there was an impropriety in pro-

nouncing that mode *lawful* only, when no one present had any doubts of its being so. Others seemed to think that by saying nothing about *dipping*, that mode was meant to be excluded, as not a *lawful* mode. This they did not wish to pronounce. When therefore, the clause as originally reported was put to vote there were 25 votes in favor of it, and 24 against it."*

From this is vamped up the statement in the tract; and the statement is made in such a connection as to lead people to understand, that "immersion" had been the common mode, and the Assembly substituted sprinkling for it. There was no such substitution, either in fact, or even so much as a substitution of the *word* sprinkling for the *word* immersion in the Directory. Dr. Miller appears to be amply justified when he says,—"The common statement of this matter by our own Baptist brethren is an entire misrepresentation."

That those who print and circulate this tract know its statements to be false, I can-

* Miller on Baptism, p. 147. He refers to his authorities, "Lightfoot's Life by Strype," Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, II. pp. 106, 107.

not affirm. That its statements *are* grossly untrue, may be seen by a bare reference to dates, which every school boy *ought* to know.

The *time* when the sprinkling was said to be substituted for immersion was the year 1643. Twenty three years before this, our Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth; and if immersion had been the common practice in England they would have brought it with them. But the fact was so far from this, that sixteen years after, Roger Williams, removed from Massachusetts to Providence, and continued a Pædo-baptist for three years longer. When at length he turned Baptist, as Mr. Hague, the present minister of the original Roger Williams Church in Providence, says, in his "Historical Discourse," —(and as is narrated in the 'Life of Roger Williams')—"The difficulty that arose was the want of a proper administrator: for at that time, *no ordained minister could be found in America who had been immersed on a profession of faith.*"* And yet there were many *aged* ministers in America, who had long been ministers in Old England before they came

* Hague's Historical Discourse, 1840, p. 27.

across the waters! A Mr. Ezekiel Hariman, a layman, first immersed Mr. Williams, and then Mr. Williams immersed the rest. This was the beginning of the Baptists in America.*

So again, *Richard Blount*, in the reign of King Charles II. went from England to the Netherlands to be immersed, because he deemed it could not suitably be done in England; and when he returned, he immersed the Rev. Samuel Blackstock, and these two immersed the rest of a number who wished to become a Baptist Church, on what they deemed the proper foundation; to wit, an authorized ministry and an authorized baptism. Could this have happened had sprinkling been substituted for immersion only a few years before, and that by a majority of only one in an Assembly of the leading Divines of England?†

* Mr. Williams soon after left the Baptists and turned Seeker.

† There were at this time some few Baptists in England, but it does not appear that any were in the Assembly of Divines.

Dr. Murdock (on Mosheim. Vol. III.) says, "*The first regular congregation of English Baptists*, appears to have originated from certain English Puritans, who return-

From these facts alone any one may see that it cannot possibly be true, that immersion had been the common mode of baptism in England up to 1643, and that sprinkling was then substituted for it, on the authority of the Assembly of Divines.*

ed from Holland after the death of their Pastor, Rev. *John Smith*, who died in 1610."—"From this time onward, churches of *General Baptists* were formed here and there in different parts of England. But, in general, thay made no great figure, and do not appear to have had much connection, or to have professed one uniform faith." "*The Particular Baptists*" (Calvinistic) trace their origin to a congregation of *Independents*, established in London in 1616. This congregation having become very large, and some of them differing from the others on the subject of infant baptism, they agreed to divide. Those who disbelieved in infant baptism were regularly dismissed, in 1633, and formed into a new church under Rev. *John Spilsbury*. And in 1639 a new Baptist church was formed. Churches of Particular Baptists now multiplied rapidly." They published a confession of their faith in 1643, (published by the SEVEN churches of London,) "which was reprinted in 1644, and 1646, and which was revised in 1689, by a convention of elders and delegates from more than one hundred churches of England and Wales." Murdock's Mosheim, Vol. III. pp. 540, 541.

* With about as much reason it is elsewhere asserted that sprinkling was substituted for immersion by the authority of the Pope, in 1311.

When this tract first fell into my hands, I looked at it with astonishment ; and concluded that it was some *stray* print, published by some ignorant and irresponsible man, a work which nobody would be willing to acknowledge. But on turning to the title page, I see it printed at the bottom in staring capitals ; — "*Philadelphia : Baptist General Tract Society. No.* 21 *South* 4*th Street.*"

I need not pursue this matter further : nor indeed was it essential to advert to it at all. If we should grant every thing from ecclesiastical history which any desire to assume, it would bear nothing on the question. Christianity in the hands of men may become corrupt :—it *did* early become corrupt. The word of God is the pure fountain What instructions may be gathered there? To the law, to the testimony. History shows that immersion was not at any time considered by the ancient church as *essential* to baptism : and if the ancient church HAD thought it essential, still we have no authority for making that essential which was not deemed so by the apostles and the word of God. I return to the argument.

3. *On the supposition that the early "disciples always baptized by immersion, is there evidence that they considered that mode essential?"*

Suppose the command had been, "*Let every believer go down from Jerusalem to Jericho.*" Suppose that the Savior and his early disciples all went by one particular way, and always rode on ass colts. Must we always go in that road? Must we always ride on ass colts?—or is it essential whether we ride at all? Certainly not. We are commanded to go down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and this we must do. But to go in any particular road; or to ride; or to walk; is no part of the command. The *thing* is required, the *mode* is not a matter of command.* He usurps the prerogative of

* Thus, we must celebrate the Lord's Supper with bread and wine. But Christ and the apostles first celebrated it under the following circumstances, in which nobody deems it essential to follow them. 1. It was at *night*. 2. In an *upper room*. 3. They used *unleavened bread*. 4. They partook in a *reclining posture*. 5. *After eating a meal*. 6. *With no female desciples present*. To my mind there appears just as much reason for insisting on the *mode* of baptism, as for insisting on the observance of these six particulars in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and no more.

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Christ, who makes any particular *road*, or any particular *mode* of going, essential.

So here; we are to be *baptized*, and *simply* baptized. But I have shown that the words "baptize" and "baptism" were in common use among the Jews at that time to denote a ritual purification by sprinkling or pouring; possibly also they were in use to denote a ritual purification by immersion, though this lacks proof; and were it indubitably proved, still the only effect would be to show that there are *three* authorized modes of baptizing instead of two; and the argument would be the stronger that the mode is not essential. In this state of the case, suppose Christ and his disciples had all been baptized by sprinkling. This does not bind us to be baptized in that mode. Had they all been baptized by immersion, it would not bind us to an immersion. Here are *several modes* of applying water, all called equally *baptism*. Our Lord commands us to be *baptized:* the particular *mode* he does not designate. How can we tell that he did not, for the most consequential reasons, leave it indeterminate? If we add the *mode* to the command, we add to the law of Christ.

But here it may be replied, "Is there not ONE faith, ONE Lord, ONE BAPTISM?" Indeed, it is much insisted by our Baptist brethren that the *unity* of baptism consists in *unity of mode;* and that three modes, sprinkling, pouring, immersing,—make *three* baptisms.

I might here be entitled to insist, that if the unity of baptism consists in unity of *mode*, then the mode of immersion is most certainly excluded; for *sprinkling* has been proved a lawful mode; and *pouring*, by its superior proof, comes in with a better title than immersion, even if sprinkling were given up.

But the unity of baptism does not consist in the unity of *mode;* but in the unity of *design*, the unity of *signification*, unity with regard to the *great truths* to which it refers; unity in the "one body into which we are all baptized by the same Spirit." The Bible unequivocally teaches us that the *one baptism* does not consist in the *one mode.* Turn to Acts xix. Certain disciples had been ignorantly baptized with John's baptism, instead of the baptism which Christ enjoined, and were baptized over again. I am aware that many of our Baptist brethren think it

necessary to insist that there was no re-baptism: and it is scarce a wonder; because if there was here a re-baptism it effectually shows that John's baptism and Christian baptism are entirely distinct; and spoils many arguments founded on the notion that the baptisms are the same. Thus, in the Tract which has already been quoted,—the "Familiar Dialogue between Peter and Benjamin," published by the "Baptist General Tract Society," (p. 5.) Peter is made to say in the dialogue,—"I have been a little puzzled with the account given in Acts xix. 1-6, respecting the disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus. *Do you think they were re-baptized?*" Benjamin is made to answer:—"*By no means*," and I think I can relieve your mind in few words:" and then goes on to argue that there was no re-baptism. I only wonder that a cause, which requires so plain a statement of Scripture to be denied, should be thought worth defending. The words of the Scripture are these: "And he said unto them, *unto what were ye then baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism.* Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that

they should believe on him which should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus. *When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them."

Hard lot, indeed, to be driven to deny that here was a re-baptism, and yet to hold on to the scheme that requires such a denial!

But mark: here were *two* baptisms, while doubtless there was but *one* mode. *Unity of mode, therefore, does not make unity of baptism;* AND UNITY OF BAPTISM DOES NOT CONSIST IN THE MODE; it lies in something else. Here the *mode* was good enough; but the *design*, the *intent*, the *truths on the faith of which* the baptism was based were different. These made the two transactions in *one mode*, two baptisms. The "*one* baptism," therefore, consists in the one *design*, the one *signification*, the unity of faith *in the same truths*, which are represented by baptism; and ONENESS *in these things* would make ONE BAPTISM, though the mere outward modes should vary ever so much; and the mode is not essential. To make the unity of baptism consist in the *mode*, is, as if we were to

make a man's identity consist in his dress: he is *one* man in a coat with broad skirts; he is quite *another* man and has lost all his legal and social and personal identity in a coat with *narrow* skirts. And mark still further here:—in the main particulars,—the essentials,—of the baptism with which Christ was baptized, we are *not to follow him;* and so another set of arguments and of strong appeals falls to the ground.

He was not baptized *till thirty years old*, and that for a special reason. We are not to follow him here.

He was not baptized "*unto repentance.*" John's disciples could not follow him here.

He was not baptized to "*wash away sins.*" No man can follow him here.

He was not baptized in the "*name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.*" No man is to follow him here.

He was baptized as an introduction to *his perpetual priesthood.* No man is to follow him here.

In fine: according to the word of God, if we had been baptized with John's baptism ever so ceremoniously; in order to *Christian* baptism we must needs be *baptized over again.*

I go on with the argument. Now our Lord commanded us simply to be *baptized:* and there being in common use *two* (or if we grant our Baptist brethren what we do not desire to deny, but what they cannot prove,—*three*) modes of ritual purifying called *baptism;* our Lord left the mode indeterminate. How can we tell that he did not with deliberation and for the most consequential reasons, leave it indeterminate?

Suppose, you make the mode essential, and insist that all shall be immersed, or barred out of the church. How can you tell that you are not presuming to require what the Lord purposely left optional for the most cogent and essential reasons? And if so, how will you answer it to God for attempting thus to judge "another man's servant," and to "lord it over God's heritage"? Suppose that Christ forbore to enjoin the particular mode of immersion for this reason: to wit—that his Gospel is designed to fill the whole earth, and to be applicable with all its ordinances to all men every where in all conditions. But there are *deserts*, where men may travel for days

and not find water enough for immersion. There are frozen regions where immersion is a large part of the year nearly or quite impracticable. Many are sick; many are in such a state of health that they cannot go abroad,—much less go and be immersed,—especially in winter, without endangering their lives. Must all these be kept from Christ's ordinances, because some think that what Christ saw fit, (perhaps for these very reasons among others) not to prescribe, should be made essential? Because these *cannot be immersed*, are they therefore to linger and die without ever partaking of the Lord's Supper, whatever their desire for that and for baptism too? It has been well said, that "baptism was made for man, not man for baptism;" and may not Christ have designedly left the mode undetermined for such reasons as these? Is there no presumption in *adding* the mode to his command? Or, waiving these considerations, and supposing that, in Judea, immersion might always have been readily practised on account of the comparative mildness of the climate; and granting, moreover, that nobody was ever sick

there ; can we be sure that it is entirely in keeping with the simplicity of Christ, and with the lightness and simplicity of his ordinances, to—cut a hole in the ice and immerse sixty men and women, while the weather is so cold as to keep a number of men employed in stirring the water with poles to keep it from freezing over while the immersion is going on ?—as the papers have informed us was done in the Delaware river the last winter. Since Christ has not commanded this, nor required baptism to be done in the mode of immersion at all, how can we dare to add such doings as these to his gentle and easy commands ?

We cannot. We dare not. And yet for this we must be cut off from communion with those whom we love as brethren. We see no scriptural evidence for the peculiar mode of *immersion :* but we leave our brethren to decide for themselves according to their conscience. We have conscientiously intended to obey the command to be baptized. We think we have obeyed it. But our brethren judge over our consciences and would thrust us from the church, unless we will submit our judgment and our con-

science to theirs. They often say to us, "since you regard immersion as valid baptism you ought to come to us since we cannot in conscience come to you." We reply, Brethren, can you not allow us liberty of conscience too? Can you not receive us without stripping us of our dearest rights? We are ready to allow and give immersion to them; but we demand liberty of conscience too. We are required to come under a yoke which we are confident Christ never imposed. We are required to do that which we consider as adding to Christ's commands; thrusting out many from his ordinances; and compelling many more to enjoy them at the risk of their lives. Nay, if we would yield our own consciences and surrender our own liberty, they would then compel us, in the same manner, to lord it over the consciences of others; or in default, cast us out of the church; and so if the Baptist were the only church,—all those whose earnest research and whose honest conscience should not lead them to see immersion, and only immersion, in all the baptisms of the New Testament, must be debarred from Christ's house on earth, and ex-

communicate from his table! And every one who will consent to join them is, perforce, compelled to join in this unhallowed proscription of the children of God and heirs of salvation; and that under penalty of discipline and censure even to excommunication! A man may not commune at Christ's table, even with his own father, or with the wife of his bosom, be they ever so faithful to Christ; if they are so unfortunate as not to see immersion in baptism, and have been baptized in any other mode! No—every thing must be squared to *their* understanding, and cut according to *their* opinion. The wife shall be debarred from partaking of the emblems of the body and blood of the Savior in connection with her dying husband, who desires once more, before he departs, to commemorate a Savior's love! We feel not at liberty to countenance such a ruthless despotism as this. Could we surrender our own liberty, we have yet some conscience left, which forbids us to lend our aid in tyrannizing over the consciences of others. Had we personally no objection to immersion, we should feel bound, for freedom's sake, for the truth's sake, and for

Christ's sake, to " stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." We are not willing to be made the instruments of destroying the liberty of others. As we love Christ we dare not be brought under such a " yoke of bondage to any man." As we love God or regard the rights of men, we dare not join in this unhallowed lording it over the consciences of others. We remember that it is written, " Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." We leave it to every man's conscience to decide whether he has been baptized, and when satisfied that according to his *own* understanding and his *own* conscience he has obeyed the command to be baptized, we dare not judge over him. On the customary tokens of piety, and on the customary profession,—as that custom exists in churches of any other evangelical denomination, we receive him, and with open arms, to our communion, and to that table which is not ours but the Lord's.*

But, when we have seen on what ground

* " There was at that time, (1689), several churches of Calvinistic Baptists, who held to open communion,

exclusive immersion is required; when,—as we are required to prove all things,—we *prove* it by the word of God;—and in our sober judgment, its very foundations flit away "like the baseless fabric of a vision;" how can we on such grounds join in unchurching and cutting off from the com-

especially in Bedfordshire, where John Bunyan preached." (Murdock's Mosheim, Vol. III. p. 540.)

"Before the erection of regular Baptist congregations, and indeed for some time after, it was very common for Baptists and others to belong to the same church, and to worship and commune together." (Ibid. p. 541.)

The celebrated Robert Hall was most strenuously opposed to close communion.

Our Baptist brethren are fond of saying that they hold to no more close communion than we do. Will they put it to the test? Will they receive to their communion every person who has, on a credible profession of piety, been received to some evangelical church of another denomination, and who, "according to his own understanding and his own conscience, has obeyed the command to be baptized?"

We give the following invitation before the communion: "Members of other churches present, of all evangelical denominations, in regular standing in their own churches, are invited to partake with us." If our Baptist brethren hold to no more close communion than we, will they adopt this form? If not, will they give up their assertion as fallacious and untrue.

munion of the saints so many others, who, we cannot doubt, are received of God ? No, we have not so learned Christ. We have gone to His word for our views of truth and order. On that we rest. Leaving it to others to answer their own conscience, and to enjoy their belief without let or molestation from us, on the ground which we have examined and proved we stand fast. If our views of faith and order should be assailed, we shall nevertheless remember, that we have examined and proved them ;—and, with much prayer and with solemn and full conviction, have found that they rest broadly and solidly upon the eternal word of God.

III.

INFANT BAPTISM.

SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY.

MATTHEW XXVII. 19.

Go ye into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

THERE are two questions with regard to baptism, on which evangelical Christians are divided; one respecting the *mode*, and the other respecting the *subjects*. These two questions are entirely distinct. There is no reason why those who differ concerning one might not agree concerning the other.

Between us and our Baptist brethren there is no difference of opinion concerning the *subjects* of baptism, except concerning infants. We agree that *adults* are not to be

baptized, save on a creditable profession of evangelical faith and repentance. The question concerning the subjects is therefore limited to this single inquiry: *Are the infant children of believing parents to be baptized?*

The law of the institution makes no express mention of infants. It is therefore contended that this is conclusive against infant baptism; as in a positive institution we are to go by the letter of the law; and all beyond this, as well as every thing short of this, is wrong.

I humbly conceive, however, that Christ has a right to make known his will, in this or in any other matter, in just such a way as he pleases;—that the incidental *recognition*, by the apostles, of infants as properly embraced in the intent of that law, or their actual *practice* of baptizing infants, would be an *authoritative interpretation* of the law, as extending its provisions to infants. And we deceive ourselves; we undertake to correct the widom of our Lord Jesus Christ; we are guilty of disobedience to his authority; if, in such a case, we allow any notions or arguments about a "positive institution" to lead us to act in opposition to the will of

Christ, no less truly made known than if the warrant had expressed infants by name. The question is not, *Are infants expressly named?* but, *Has Christ any where, and in any way, instructed us whether they are to be embraced or excluded?*

On this principle our Baptist brethren themselves argue and practice in other matters; and that, too, in matters pertaining to "*positive institutions.*" Indeed, any other principle than this would shut out the Lord Jesus Christ from being master and lawgiver over his own house. Who are we, to prescribe to him how he is to make known his will; and that under penalty of having his will rejected, if he does not make it known in just the manner that we think he ought to employ?

The Sabbath is a positive institution; and God has expressly designated the *seventh day*, yet all Christians in the world, that keep a Sabbath,—save a very diminutive fraction of one sect,—keep the *first* day. Where is the *express* warrant for this change? There is none. Our Baptist brethren, like ourselves, make out a warrant by *inference*. We find the will of Christ made known in the Scriptures,

—not *expressly* but *circumstantially*. The practice of the Apostles teaches the will of Christ,—even though it be but incidentally mentioned. We admit the validity of this warrant by inference. If truly made out, it is as clearly the will of Christ as though we had found an *express* warrant in so many words, "Let the Sabbath be changed from the seventh day to the first."

The "*Seventh Day Baptists*" are the only consistent ones here. They do with the Sabbath as they do by infant baptism; they admit nothing but an *express* warrant, in so many words, to bear upon either question. "And," said one of their ministers to me, "we feel that with our *Baptist* brethren our arguments are unanswerable. *They must either keep the seventh day as the Sabbath, or else reject the very principles on which they reject infant baptism; they must give up their argument, or keep the seventh day, or else determine to act inconsistently and absurdly.*"

His conclusion was manifestly sound. And I could not help adding, Both they and you must give up *female communion* too: for when Christ instituted his Supper there were no female disciples present, though he had

such at the time; and he said not one word about them in the law of the ordinance: nor are they any where *expressly* mentioned as partaking in the celebration of the ordinance; and yet the Lord's Supper is a pure "*positive institution*," and say our brethren, You must go by the *letter;* you must not go beyond; you must not make out a warrant by inference; you must have it *express*.

I know they prove the propriety of female communion; but they prove it by INFERENCE, and not by any EXPRESS command or precept. I admit the proof to be valid: but neither our Baptist brethren nor any body else can make it out, without at the same time sweeping away the very foundation of their argument against infant baptism.

I only insist that the *same sort of proof* be considered equally valid to prove the authority for infant baptism. I am willing to have it required that that proof be ample. I have no fear for the issue, if the condition of receiving infant baptism be ten times the amount of proof required to substantiate the change of the Sabbath, or to make out the Scriptural warrant for female communion.

You perceive that I have here made a "*concession;*" if it be proper to call that a concession, which concerns a thing that we never attempted to hold; and which is a simple statement of a truth that every Pædobaptist in the world was always free to acknowledge. The "concession" is, that the law of baptism makes no EXPRESS mention of infants.

But having made this concession, I must be allowed to enter my protest against being understood or reported to have conceded that the Scriptures furnish no warrant for infant baptism. I concede no such thing. I maintain the contrary. Nor will it be deemed a matter of wonder to those who know what use is sometimes made of concessions, that I should deem it necessary to enter this protest.

Thus, a concession of Dr. WOODS is sometimes quoted in such a way as to leave those, who hear it, under the impression, that Dr. Woods admits that the Scriptures furnish no warrant for infant baptism.* So far

* The writer has himself heard Dr. Woods quoted in this manner before a full congregation.

as his words are quoted, they are quoted correctly from p. 11, of his work on Infant Baptism, "Whatever may have been the precepts of Christ or his apostles, to those who enjoyed their personal instructions; it is a plain case, that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings."

Here the matter is left. The quotation is truth as far as it goes: but what is essential to THE truth is omitted; and the omission causes Dr. WOODS to be understood as giving up all claim of a *Scriptural* warrant for infant baptism; whereas, in truth, Dr. Woods gives his testimony directly to the contrary. His "*concession*" refers only to an "EXPRESS precept." His work was written for the *very purpose* of proving the SCRIPTURAL WARRANT for infant baptism. He is very explicit, (p. 42), to take his position in the most formal words; and he prints them in italics that his position may be well noted and understood; and these are his words:

"But I shall now proceed to argue the point from the INSPIRED RECORDS *just as they are. My position is, that the Scriptures of the New Testament, understood according to*

the just rules of interpretation, IMPLY THAT THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS ARE TO BE BAPTIZED."

In the same manner, in a *tract* published by the "*General Baptist Tract Society*," entitled "THE SCRIPTURE GUIDE TO BAPTISM, *by Pengilly*," and widely circulated both here and elsewhere, Mr. BAXTER is introduced as speaking in the strongest terms against Infant Baptism. One long quotation from his writings introduced for this purpose, ends with these words: "I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, that it is one sort of faith, even saving, THAT MUST GO BEFORE BAPTISM." The last words are printed in capitals. JEWETT, in his work on Baptism, has introduced the same quotation for the same purpose; to make RICHARD BAXTER bear his witness against infant baptism.

And again, "*The Scripture Guide to Baptism, by Pengilly*," (p. 44), after asserting in italics, "*That we have nowhere found a single place or passage that describes, records, or implies the baptism of any infants;*" says, "The reader will not suppose this a hasty conclusion *when he hears the following* PÆDOBAPTISTS." Under this, he quotes again

Mr. BAXTER, thus: "I conclude that all examples of baptism in Scripture do mention only the administration of it to the professors of saving faith: and the precepts give us no other direction. And I provoke Mr. Blake as far as is seemly for me to do, to name ONE precept or *example* for any other, and make it good if he can."

Here is a point in question, and witnesses are called. Richard Baxter is brought upon the stand. *Mr. Baxter, Is Infant Baptism right according to the word of God?* An answer is put into his mouth, taken from his works, in which he is reasoning—not concerning infants,—but concerning *adults;* and showing that "it is *one sort* of faith, even *saving*," (and not simply the intellectual belief of an unconverted man,) "that must go before baptism." And so, Richard Baxter is by this process made to bear witness against Infant Baptism!

But, Mr. Baxter, you were a Pædo-baptist: did you not baptize children, and so teach and exhort in the house of God? O yes: and dearly prized the ordinance, and would not have given it up sooner than I would have given up my life. But, Mr. Baxter,

what is this then they say of you? Your *name* is spread abroad in tracts upon tracts, and in books upon books, and goes out to the four winds of heaven; and *your own strong language* is printed in the boldest relief, as though the author of the "Saint's Rest," and of the "Call to the Unconverted," had borne his testimony most decidedly against infant baptism! *Are* you so opposed, Mr. Baxter? Is this witness *true* of you? What say you of *Infants*, Mr. Baxter? Do you cut these off from the Church of God?

To be so quoted is well nigh enough to call the dead "Saint" from his "Rest." He answers on this point: and it is Baxter's own strong emotion and burning words that speak: "GOD," says Mr. Baxter, "GOD HAD NEVER A CHURCH ON EARTH, OF WHICH INFANTS WERE NOT INFANT MEMBERS, SINCE THERE WERE INFANTS IN THE WORLD."*

* Baxter's Comment. on Matt. 28, 19, (in GRAY on the Authority for Infant Baptism, Halifax, 1837, p. 200)

The hottest controversy which Mr. Baxter ever had was with the Baptists. A *Mr. Tombes* had written a book against infant baptism, and thought that Baxter was "the chief hinderer" of its success: "Though," says Mr. Baxter, "I never meddled with that point."

But enough of these "concessions." Enough of these clouds of quotations from Pædo-baptist writers to make them say what, quoted in such connections and for such purposes, is heaven-wide from the faith in which they lived and in which they died. What is done to the living *Woods* and to the dead *Baxter*, is done to *Calvin*, and to a host of others. These men went to the word of God for their doctrine. Whatever would not stand by that rule they scrupulously rejected,—with loathing and abhor-

"He had," says Baxter, "so high a conceit of his writings that he thought them unanswerable, and that none could deal with them in that way." "At last, somehow, he urged me to give my judgment of them: when I let him know they did not satisfy me to be of his mind, but went no further with him." "But he unavoidably contrived to bring me into the controversy which I shunned." In the end Baxter agreed to hold a public discussion in Mr. Tombes' church, Jan. 1, 1649. "This dispute," says Baxter, "satisfied all my own people, and the country that came in, and Mr. Tombes' own townsmen, except about twenty whom he had perverted, who gathered into his church; which never increased to above twenty-two, that I could learn."

Not long after, Baxter published his work entitled—"PLAIN SCRIPTURE PROOF OF INFANTS' CHURCH MEM-

rence,—"hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." They taught and practised sprinkling and pouring for baptism: they taught and practised the baptism of infants:—for the warrant of both they went to the word of God. And now, the influence of their *names* and the weight of their piety is attempted to be laid into the scale against the doctrines which they practised and taught, as the truth and the ordinances of God. Is this dealing kindly and truly with the dead? Is this dealing kindly and righteously with the truth?

In the same manner, in this work by "Pengilly," published by the Baptist Gen-

BERSHIP AND BAPTISM." This work passed through several editions. "The book," says Baxter, "God blessed with unexpected success to stop abundance from turning Anabaptists, and reclaiming many."

Nineteen years after, Baxter published another work, entitled—MORE PROOFS OF INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, AND CONSEQUENTLY THEIR RIGHTS TO BAPTISM. This book is divided into three parts, which contain, he tells us, "The plain proof of God's statute or covenant for Infants' church membership from the creation, and the continuance of it till the institution of Baptism: with the defence of that proof against the frivolous exceptions of Mr. Tombes."—(*Ormes' Life and Times of Baxter*, Vol. II. p. 252.)

eral Tract Society, as the "Scripture Guide to Baptism," the names of such men as *Doddridge*, *Baxter*, *Erskine*, *Matthew Henry*, *Calvin*, *Saurin*, *Guyse*, *Charnock*, are arrayed as if against us in the particulars in which we differ from our Baptist brethren. Take the *names* from the book, and the *quotations* annexed to them, and the book is left a mere lifeless carcase. But hear them fully: hear them *truly:* and do they stand against us? Could they come up from the dead into the midst of this community, to a man they would wend their way to *these* walls for the truth and order which they held as established by the word of God. To a man they would lift up their voice for the ordinances which now their *names* are made to impugn. They would cry out upon the injustice done to their memories and to the truth, by these attempts to cast the weight of their *names* against what they taught and practised, as the truth and the ordinances of God. And *others*, whose names are quoted in this tract by Pengilly, though they might not in all respects agree with *us;* would nevertheless give us their united voice on the matter now in question. The Methodists, *Whitefield*

and *Wesley;* the Episcopal *Scott;* the Bishops of the Church of England, *Tillotson*, *Burnet*, and *Taylor*, and *Archbishop Secker*, would cry out upon the injustice done to their names in arraying them, as if witnesses, against the truth and the ordinances which they held as most assuredly the truth and the ordinances of God.

But turn from the authority of *names*, to the FOUNDATIONS on which these men rested their faith. "To the law; and to the testimony."

In our examination of the circumstances which bear upon the interpretation of the law of baptism, it will appear,

I. THAT THE ABRAHAMIC AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH ARE ONE AND THE SAME; BUILT ON THE SAME COVENANT; SAVED WITH THE SAME FAITH; AND CONSIDERED IN THE WORD OF GOD AS ONE AND THE SAME CHURCH.

II. THAT CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM ARE ALIKE SEALS OF THE SAME COVENANT, AND SIGNS OF THE SAME THING.

III. THAT THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS, AS THEY WERE CONNECTED WITH THE ABRAHAMIC CHURCH, ARE RECOGNIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AS SUSTAINING THE SAME RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

If these things can be proved by the certain warrant of the word of God, it will follow that the law of baptism in the Christian church is to be interpreted as extending to the children of believing parents. It would seem useless to deny the *sign* to them who have the *thing ;* and as the *seal* was once *expressly* extended to children, if they are to be excepted afterwards, in the application of another sign, of the same *meaning*, *intent* and *use*, the exception must be specified, otherwise the sign follows with the thing. God having *given his charter* and *sealed* it to a specified class of persons; afterwards while he expressly continues the charter but changes the form of the seal,—the seal in that changed form remains of course. Without an express warrant from God, man may not take away the charter, or refuse the seal.

If, in addition to this, we find,

IV. Grounds for concluding THAT APOSTLES APPLIED THE SIGN; *and certain history to show that* THE WHOLE CHURCH RECEIVED THE PRACTICE, *as they believed, from the* APOSTLES; *and so practised, uniformly all over the world, with not a man to raise his voice against the divine authority of the practice for more than*

thirty generations after Christ; I think we may rest the question as settled. It is not only *lawful;* but a correct and *authorized* interpretation of the law of the institution requires believing parents to cause their infant children to be baptized.

This is the outline of the argument which I shall pursue. And now to the proof.

I. *The Abrahamic and the Christian church are one and the same.*

The Lord appeared to Abraham (Gen. xii. 1—3,) and promised that in him should "*All the families of the earth be blessed.*" In Gen. xvii. 1—14, God again promised that Abraham should be "the father of many nations;" and that he would be "*a God to him and to his seed after him.*" At the same time God gave him the ordinance of circumcision for himself and for his seed.

Here was the commencement of the polity of the peculiar people of God intended by the term *church;* and distinguished (Rom. iii. 2,) as having entrusted to them "The oracles of God;" and (Rom. ix. 5,) as those to whom "pertain the adoption, and the covenants, and the service of God, and the promises;" and declared (1 Tim. iii. 15,) to

be "The house of God;" "the church of the living God," "the pillar and ground of the truth."

On account of this covenant God is called the "God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob;" rather than the God of Enoch, or of Noah, or of Moses, or of David. He is called THEIR GOD in relation to this covenant; as in numberless instances, so particularly in 2 Cor. vi. 16, as God hath said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be *their God* and they shall be *my people;* i. e. "*their* God," as he is not the God of other men; and they *his* people, as other men are *not* his people. So in Heb. xi. 16, "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called THEIR GOD."

This people of God, as an external visible polity, is called "ISRAEL," or the "CHURCH:" as in Acts vii. 38, the descendants of Jacob are called "THE CHURCH in the wilderness;" just as the visible polity of Christ's people are called "THE CHURCH;" as in 1 Cor. xii. 28, "And God hath set some in THE CHURCH; first apostles; secondarily prophets; thirdly teachers," &c. Here the word *Church* does not mean simply an "*assembly:*" for it is

no particular assembly that is here spoken of, but Christ's visible people every where; his *Church* in the widest sense.

But the visible Church is never made up exclusively of those who shall be saved: and so the terms "*Israel*," and "Church," are used *ordinarily* to designate the *body* of those who are *apparently* his, to wit, the visible polity made up of good and bad. Again, they are sometimes used to denote particularly those *only* who shall be the heirs of salvation. Thus, the first term is used in *both* senses in the following passage: Rom. ix. 6, "For they are not all *Israel* which are OF Israel." And the "kingdom of God" (the visible Church) is represented Luke xiii. 47, as a "Net cast into the sea, which *gathered of every kind*;" though *only cast for* the proper kinds. When full and drawn to the shore, the good are gathered in vessels; the bad are thrown away.

Now the *covenant* on which the Abrahamic Church was founded, was not a covenant of works, but of grace: and its promise was not simply of the land of Canaan—but of Heaven. Thus Rom. iv. 13, "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world,

was not to Abraham or to his seed *through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*" And (v. 11,) "He received the sign of circumcision, a *seal of the* RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH which he had yet being uncircumcised."

It has been strenuously asserted that the covenant was one of temporal promises only; and circumcision given as a mere national badge; (and indeed it is necessary for those who reject infant baptism to say something of the kind.) But the word of God teaches us otherwise. "Abraham was *justified by faith.*" Rom. iv. "The *promise* was"——"through the *righteousness of faith:*" and circumcision was "a seal of the *righteousness of faith;*" to wit, of the faith by which men must *be justified.*" So we are taught expressly (Heb. xi.) that Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Sara, and "multitudes" of their descendants,—as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable, "*died in the faith;*"—not simply in faith of the promise of Canaan, but of HEAVEN. Thus, Heb. xi. 13, 15, "And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth,"—"but now they desire a *better* coun-

try, "THAT IS, a HEAVENLY:" wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; "*for he hath prepared for them* A CITY." What "city," but *Heaven?*

And since there is no other name than Christ whereby man must be saved, Acts iv. 12, since there is "One God and *one mediator* between God and man," 1 Tim. ii. 5, these men *believed on* CHRIST. This we are expressly taught. Thus, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." So of all the ancient Israelites who were saved it is expressly said, 1 Cor. x. 2—4, "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; *and did all eat* OF THE SAME SPIRITUAL MEAT: *and did all drink of the same* SPIRITUAL DRINK: for they drank of that *spiritual* rock that followed them; *and that rock* WAS CHRIST."

Here pause a moment. Was not that the TRUE CHURCH; whose true members

Believed on Christ;
Sought a Heavenly country;
Were justified by faith;
Of whom the world was not worthy;
For whom God prepared a city;
And who are now set down in the kingdom of God?

In what respect does the Church of Christ differ from this, in the articles which may well be judged the *Articles of the true Church of God?* What more than this makes the true Church, that its true members

BELIEVE ON CHRIST;

SEEK A HEAVENLY COUNTRY;

ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH; of whom

GOD IS NOT ASHAMED TO BE CALLED THEIR GOD; and

HATH PREPARED FOR THEM A CITY; and who are now

SET DOWN IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

"But the Jewish polity is passed away." True. But the Abrahamic Church is quite a different thing from the Jewish polity. Thus, Gal. iii. 17, "And this I say, that the *covenant*, that was confirmed before of God, in Christ, the *law*, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannual, that it should make the *promise* of none effect." And if the giving of the law did not annul the covenant, certainly the covenant is not annulled by the removing of the ceremonial law. And this is the very thing for which Paul is arguing; and which the Holy Ghost,

who inspired him, teaches through his arguments:—that the covenant and its blessings remain, and come upon the Gentiles, as Paul says in express words, (v. 11) "*That the blessing of Abraham* MIGHT COME ON THE GENTILES *through Jesus Christ.*"

Now "Circumcision was not of Moses but of the fathers," John vii. 22. It was the seal of a covenant which existed before the law; and neither the giving of the law nor the removal of it affected either the covenant or the seal. The covenant remaining, the seal remained, of course, unless specially abrogated. Another form of the seal was indeed adopted under Christ, as another day was adopted for the Sabbath, instead of the seventh.

The seal being changed, circumcision was interdicted, (Acts xv.) but this was especially on the ground that those who enjoined circumcision, taught that it was needful to circumcise them and *to command them to keep the law of Moses;*" and to circumcise as well as baptize. The circumcision, under these circumstances, was enjoined and received *under the notion of being justified by the law;* and became in its practical effect

a *sign of justification by the law.* Under these circumstances, the apostles, divinely instructed, did with circumcision what Hezekiah did with "the brazen serpent that Moses had made." 2 Kings xviii. 14. It must no longer be tolerated when it became the means of sin and ruin. Paul also (Gal. v.) spoke against circumcision on the ground that they who practised it, did it under the notion of *attaining justification by the works of the law.* To keep the seventh day under the notion of being justified by the law, would put one equally off from the ground of grace. He would be "*fallen* from grace;" and "Christ should profit him nothing." It was on this ground that Paul interdicted circumcision, and on this *only;* for Paul himself, (Acts xvi. 3), when he would have Timothy go forth with him, "*took him and circumcised him*, because of the Jews which were in those quarters."

So far, then, the covenant with its seal remain unimpaired by the giving and the removing of the law.

"Wherefore, then, serveth the law?" It was added, because of transgressions, *till* the seed should come, *to whom the promise was*

made. Gal. iii. 19. The inference is inevitable; the law passes away when Christ comes; since it was only added to continue "*till*" that time. The *promise* and the *covenant remain* to be fulfilled: to wit, the promise referred to in these words, Gal. iii. 8, "And the Scripture foreseeing that God *would justify the heathen* through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, "*In thee shall* ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED."

If now *we* were to add to this, "So then modern believers are built upon the foundation of the Abrahamic covenant;" the reasoning might be questioned. But the word of God has come to such a conclusion, and it ought to seem to be no longer a matter to be questioned. "*So, then,*" says the apostle, "*they which be of faith*, are *blessed with faithful Abraham.*" "*Know ye not, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*" Gal. iii. 7. Why are they not called the children of Enoch, or of Noah, or of Elijah, or of Moses? These men had faith; and were justified by faith. If simply to be *justified by faith* be the matter in which we are "Abraham's seed," can

any mortal tell why we might not as well be called the seed of Enoch, or of Noah, or of Moses, or of Elijah? Plainly the COVENANT, and its PROMISES, are the reason why we are *Abraham's* seed: and Paul accordingly reasons on the ground of the *covenant* and the promise. But hear his conclusion, Gal. iii. 29, "*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's* seed, AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE."

I might rest the argument here; but the word of God is not content to leave the matter so. It would make it so plain, "that he may run who readeth it." Thus, the prophets uniformly represent the kingdom of Zion, not as a *new* church, but as Israel enlarged by the "*bringing in*" of the Gentiles. To say all that might be said in proof of this would be to repeat nearly all the passages in the prophets which speak of the kingdom of Christ. For your satisfaction I refer to the lxth of Isaiah, and onward through the lxvth. Here is no casting away of God's people, and the erection of an entire new polity. It is *Zion;* it is *Jerusalem* that arises and shines; *her* light being come; and the glory of the Lord being risen upon *her.* The

Gentiles come to *her* light, and kings to the brightness of *her* rising: all they gather themselves and come to *thee*." These prophecies represent the *Church of Jesus Christ* in her course to universal empire over the earth: but it is still the *ancient Zion*, and the ancient *Jerusalem*. It is still the *covenant people of* God; at a period when the promise is made sure to ALL *the seed;* not to that only which is of the law, but that which is of faith;"—to the Gentiles, upon whom the blessing of Abraham comes in the latter day.

The apostles are not less distinct in this matter than the prophets. Thus Paul, Rom. xi. 25, "Blindness *in part* is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles *be come in*." ("*In?*" Into what? To a house that is thrown down and cast away?) And more expressly in Eph. ii. 12—22, "Wherefore remember that ye, being in times past *Gentiles* in the flesh,"—"that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL, and strangers from the COVENANT OF PROMISE, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath MADE BOTH ONE, having *broken down*

the middle wall of partition,"—"Now therefore ye are no more *strangers* and *foreigners*, but *fellow citizens* with the saints, and of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and *prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

I know there are those to whose scheme it is destruction, to consider the Abrahamic covenant as pertaining at all to us; or the Abrahamic and the Christian church one and the same: and hence, when we mention these things they profess that it is all unintelligible; and throw them by contemptuously as an idle and pernicious figment. But it seems to me, that we cannot throw these things away without throwing away the word of God. But as if the Scriptures had anticipated what objections would be raised, they go on, as though determined to put the matter beyond a question, if the clearest representations of holy writ can put any thing beyond question.

Thus, in Rom. xi. "God *hath not cast away his people*" whom he foreknew,—"there is *a remnant*,"—"the rest are blinded." "*And if some of the branches be broken off*," (mark! is the trunk destroyed

when some of the branches are broken off?) "*and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them,*" (grafted *into* nothing? and *among* nothing?) "*and with them* PARTAKEST OF THE ROOT AND FATNESS *of the olive tree?*" (Tell me, ye who are familiar with the process of engrafting: is the trunk torn up and cast away, when the scion is graffed in among its green branches, and with them partakes of its *root* and *fatness?*) "Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, *thou bearest not the root,* BUT THE ROOT THEE."

Can any thing more strikingly and certainly assert, that the old trunk, the Abrahamic church is not thrown aside; but that the Christian church draws its support and sustenance from the original and still living root, *the covenant of promise;*—which secures us Christ; which secures us all the mercy that God has covenanted, or which comes to us through his Son? Could a voice from heaven, louder than seven thunders, and distinct as that which shall call the world to judgment, make this matter more plain?

One more passage of holy writ, and I have done on this point. The passage is in Rom. iv. 16, 17. "Therefore it is of *faith*

that it might be by grace, to the end that THE PROMISE might be sure to ALL *the seed ; not only to that which is of the law ;* but to that also *which is of the* FAITH of Abraham ; who is the father of US ALL ; as it is written, I have made thee a father of *many* nations."

Here I rest under the first point; believing the proof to be plain and incontrovertible,—resting on the sure authority of the word of God ; that the Abrahamic and the Christian church are one and the same ; built upon the same covenant ; saved with the same faith ; considered in the word of God as one and the same church.

I proceed to the second point.

II. *Circumcision and baptism are alike the seal of the same covenant, and the sign of the same thing.*

God appointed circumcision the seal of his covenant with Abraham in these words, Gen. xvii. 10. "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee : Every man child among you shall be circumcised." Here circumcision is called the "*covenant*," by a common figure of placing the *sign* for the *thing*. Every one understands that literally

circumcision is not the *covenant*, but the *token*, or *sign*, or *seal* of the covenant. That it *is* such a "sign" and "seal,"—and what it signifies we are not left to conjecture. Paul says, Rom. iv. 11, "He" (Abraham) "received the *sign* of circumcision, a SEAL of *the righteousness of the faith* which he had yet being uncircumcised." A "SIGN!" "A SEAL!" of THE RIGHTEOUSNESS of—FAITH!" Is not this "*righteousness of faith*" the very thing which Paul is urging as the ground by which the sinner is *justified*, and has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; of which justification" he cites Abraham as an illustrious example? Of this "*faith*" Abraham received circumcision as the "seal." And what was the *import* of the seal? The renewal of the heart and of the spirit. This was the *true* circumcision, of which the outward circumcision was given as the *sign*. Rom. ii. 29. "Circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit*, and not in the letter." That is, the real thing denoted by the *sign*, circumcision;—the truly *being* what circumcision should be the *sign* of being, is to be *cleansed in heart*. Of this it is the SIGN. Of the remission of sin and of the acceptance of

the soul through the righteousness of faith it is the "SEAL."

Now baptism is the *seal* and *sign* of the same things. Thus, Acts xxii. 16, "Arise and be baptized, *and wash away thy sins.*" The baptism does not literally wash away sins:" but it is the *sign*, or *token*, or *seal*, of the washing away of sins; and of acceptance with God, in *justification* through the righteousness of faith. The *real* washing away of sins is accomplished with a bloody baptism—by the *sprinkling of the blood of Christ:*" of this, baptism is the *seal*, in precisely the same manner as circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith; and the "sprinkling of blood is shadowed forth by the sprinkling of water.

And what is the import of *this* seal? What but the washing of the heart; and of the inward cleansing by the Holy Spirit, which is called the "Baptism of the Spirit;" as the *circumcision* of the heart was the work of the Holy Spirit; so here the baptism (or cleansing) of the heart, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, is called, "The *washing of regeneration*, and the *renewing* of the *Holy Ghost*," and this is shadowed forth by the "washing of water,"

or baptism: as it is said in Tit. iii. 5, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might *sanctify* and *cleanse it* with the WASHING OF WATER by the word."

We have, then, *baptism* and *circumcision;* each a "*sign*," each a "*seal*," and each *as* a sign and *as* a seal signifying precisely the same thing.

But the word of God goes further, and expressly calls *baptism*, the *circumcision of Christ:* (or what is its precise equivalent—*Christian circumcision.*) Thus, Col. ii. 11,12, "In whom *ye are circumcised*, with the *circumcision made without hands;*"—(Here is the *real* circumcision, the *inward* "circumcision of the heart and of the Spirit:"—"the *washing* of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost")—"in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST: buried with him IN BAPTISM." Here is the outward circumcision of Christ,—(the *sign* of the inward,)—*baptism.* Again, Phil. iii. 3, Christians are called "*The circumcision*," in allusion to their having wrought in them the thing signified by circumcision, and of which *baptism* under the dispensation of Christ is the outward sign. "For we are the *circumci-*

sion, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

The Abrahamic church had a "*seal*" of the righteousness of faith. "The Christian church is the same: has the Christian church a *seal* of the righteousness of faith? If the Scriptures may be trusted, it has:—*baptism*, signifying the same thing as circumcision, and, in so many words, called the circumcision of Christ."

It is manifest, therefore, that baptism is substituted for circumcision:

IT IS A SEAL OF THE SAME COVENANT;
ORDAINED FOR THE SAME CHURCH;
IT MEANS THE SAME THING;
IT IS EMPLOYED FOR THE SAME USE:
WHILE CIRCUMCISION IS PASSED AWAY.

Here is the *reality* of substitution. If any dislike the *word* substitution, I care not to dispute for the word: it is enough for me that I have proved the reality. Baptism is a sign, and but a sign; used as a seal; holding the same place; having the same meaning; fulfilling the same use; under the same covenant; and in the same church; while circumcision is passed away. Here

is the *reality* of substitution. If any dislike the word, let the word be dropped: the *reality* remains, based upon the word of God. Baptism is now, what circumcision was once,—a seal of the righteousness of faith, and of God's promise to be the God of such, *and* of their seed after them. Christianity has no other sign or seal of the righteousness of faith.*

Now what would those, who received the command to apply this new seal, understand with regard to the subjects to whom it was to be applied? They well understood the Abrahamic and the Christian church to be one and the same: built on the same covenant, saved with the same faith, and regarded in the word of God as one and the same church. Circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith,—was, by Divine command, applied to children. When a Gentile was

* It has been objected that circumcision was applied only to *males*. Might not this be among the reasons for a change of the seal? A distinction was made between male and female under the Mosaic dispensation, as between Jew and Greek, bond and free: but under Christ this distinction was abolished, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither *male* nor *female*." Hence—the seal remaining,—there was a necessity for changing its *form*.

proselyted, the same seal was applied to him and to his children. In every covenant and promise of God, their children had been included : and this fact must have deeply impressed their minds, that every where throughout the law and the prophets, God was still accustomed to join in the same polity the parents and the children. To *exclude* the children—is a strange thing, especially from a seal of the same covenant, which still retained in its promises the blessings promised to children. Here is a *new* seal of the same covenant,—the same covenant, only *enlarged*—extending the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles through faith. Does the ratification and the enlargement of the covenant—cut off the children, while nothing is revoked and nothing changed save the *form* of the seal. Here is a *new form* of the seal, but it has the same signification. The command is—"Go teach" (make disciples of) all nations, *baptizing* them. Had the command been—go preach to the Gentiles—the "Gospel" which was before preached to Abraham, Gal. iii. 8—*circumcising* them ; "he that believeth" and is *circumcised* "shall be saved ;" there could

be no possibility of doubting that the infants of believing parents are to be included. But how is the case altered when they are to apply another sign of the same design and signification? Is the case altered at all? Will they not understand it as referring to the same subjects? So they *must* naturally understand it: such would be its inevitable interpretation, unless there were an express exception of such infants in the command. Without some warrant, it is, methinks, impossible that the disciples would presume to take away from parents and children the privileges granted to them by the charter of Jehovah. These of necessity stand till Jehovah himself takes them away. The chartered privileges remaining to them; the *seal* of that charter, as it was once theirs, would remain, even though the form of the seal be changed.

This has been illustrated by a homely similitude, and yet a similitude so much in point that I will copy it.*

A man orders his servants to mark the sheep of his flock with a bloody sign; and is careful to add, See that you apply this sign

* See a valuable sermon on this subject by Rev. Erdix Tenny, of Lyme, N. H.

to *all the lambs* also. Afterwards, he sees fit to dispense with the *bloody* sign made with a knife in the flesh ; and ordains that his servants mark his sheep with *paint:* but he says nothing about the lambs. Will those servants, because the marking is a "positive institution," argue that the lambs are no longer to be marked ? As they buy more sheep with lambs, will they mark the sheep, but say they have no warrant for marking the lambs ? The contrary. And so, from the very circumstances of the case, the disciples of Christ, understanding the design and import of baptism, and having been previously accustomed to extend another sign, of the some import and use, to children,—would naturally interpret the command to baptize, as implying the baptism of infants. Had it been objected, that men are to *believe* and be baptized ; and that even "*saving* faith" is to go before baptism in the case of adults, they would still remember, that infants could no more believe in Abraham's day than they can now ; and yet at God's command, they received "circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of—faith ;" and that the objection would have had precisely the

same force against circumcision then, that it has against baptism now. They would have remembered, moreover, that if the want of a capacity for "believing" should hinder baptism, the same reasoning would prove that they cannot be saved: since the Gospel says, "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved;" "He that *believeth not*, shall be damned;" and infants cannot believe. But a reasoning which proves too much, and proves what is false, proves nothing at all: and the objection falls to the ground.

Another circumstance would have had weight upon their minds in all questions touching the relations of children under the Gospel dispensation. Some parents once brought little children (infants, says Luke, xviii. 15) to Christ, that he should lay his hands on them and bless them. His disciples forbade them. They understood that Christ's kingdom was to rest upon faith in the soul, and upon the intelligent obedience of men to his precepts; but how could children have this faith or this knowledge? They appear to have come to the same conclusion concerning bringing little children

to Christ that he might *touch* them, that many in these days arrive at concerning the baptism of little children ; — "*What good* can it do to an unconscious babe ?" At all events, they forbade these parents to bring their infants to Christ for this purpose. But Christ rebuked them ; he called the little children to him ; *he took them in his arms ;* he blessed them ; he said, "*Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.*" He meant by the kingdom of Heaven, either his *earthly* church or his *heavenly ;* it matters not which for the argument. If the *heavenly* church is, in part, made up of such ; then this was a sufficient reason for Christ why he should *take them in his arms* and bless them ; and rebuke those who would forbid them to be brought to him. It is the *very* reason that he alleged : and he himself drew these conclusions from the reason. What an argument for bringing little children to Christ now—that he may seal them as his own ; and that *visibly* as he did when he took them in his arms ! But if by "*Kingdom of heaven*," he meant his "*earthly church*," then the argument is at an end :

they are to be baptized on this *express* warrant.

Those who wish to prevent this passage from bearing on the question at issue say, that by the words "*of such*," our Lord meant—not of such *infants*, but of such "simple hearted and humble persons" is the kingdom of heaven. This would be a good reason why "simple hearted and humble persons" should not be forbidden to come to Christ;—but the fact that "simple hearted and humble" adults belong to the kingdom of God, is no reason why Christ should take *infants* in his arms and bless *them*.

It is said, we forget that Jesus did not *baptize* them. No we do not forget that "Jesus himself baptized *not*, but his disciples." It is not necessary for us to assert or to suppose that these infants were baptized at all. Christ's disciples were sent at first to preach, not a Redemption completed, but to preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." Their *final* commission was after the resurrection of our Lord; and at that time he instituted his baptism; which appears to be essentially different from the baptism practised before. The disciples of

Christ *baptized* newly made disciples before this, but it seems to have been John's "baptism of repentance," Acts. xix. 4, and not the baptism instituted by Christ as the new seal of his covenant. Grant it, if our brethren please, that these infants were not baptized.* This conduct of Christ, and this rebuke which he administered to those who would forbid infants, would at least teach his disciples no more to reject infants from the blessings of the Christian religion, under the notion that infants cannot believe. It would teach them no more to forbid parents to bring them to Christ for his blessing. It would teach them to be cautious how they forbade infants from the privileges which God had chartered to them in his covenant. It was *designed* to teach them how Christ regarded infants; and the remembrance of this would necessarily bear upon the interpretation which they would give with regard to the application of the

* Though as much is said of their baptism as there is of the baptism of any PARTICULAR *adults* from this time forward during the life of Christ, or indeed during the previous part of his ministry. No *particular* cases are mentioned. Silence in one case proves as much as in another.

new seal, whether to apply it to infants or not.

But how they did in fact interpret the law, I come now to show under the third head.

III. "*That the children of believers, as they were connected with the Abrahamic church, are recognised in the New Testament as sustaining the same relation to the Christian church.*

"*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.*" 1. Cor. vii. 14. Of course this cannot mean that the children are spiritually holy, simply because one of the parents is a believer. The word *holy* here, is the opposite of *unclean*, with which it is contrasted. And the word *unclean*, (the same in the original language as well as ours,) is used in Acts x. 14, 15, 28, and Acts xi. 3, 8, 9, in a way which fully explains the use of it here. Peter was to be prepared to go and instruct and baptize Cornelius, a Gentile. A vision was given him, of a great sheet, knit at the four corners, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, saying, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said,

Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is *common* or UNCLEAN. And the voice spoke to him again: What God hath *cleansed* that call not thou common. So Peter answered the messenger of Cornelius, God hath showed me, that I should not call any man *common or* UNCLEAN. But for going to Cornelius, a Gentile, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, (as Peter might have done with another man, had he not been better instructed by the vision)—saying, thou wentest in to *men uncircumcised*, and didst *eat with them*. Then Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and told how the voice answered from heaven, saying, What God hath *cleansed*, that call not thou *common*. The point is this: to the Israelites, the Gentiles had been considered as *unclean:* out of the pale of their society, and debarred from the covenant and worship of the people of God: or as Paul expresses it, Eph. ii. 12—22, "*Gentiles* in the flesh,—strangers FROM THE COVENANT OF PROMISE.

With this explanation turn to the passage under consideration;—"Else were your children *unclean*"—cut off from the commonwealth of Christ's visible church, and

debarred from the seal of the covenant, as Pagans; or, as says MATTHEW HENRY, "*They would be heathen, out of the pale of the church and covenant of God.*" The Apostle bases his argument upon a fact which he assumes as well known and universally recognised in practice; that the children of believing parents are so far a "*Holy* seed,"—and in that sense "holy"—(as opposed to "*unclean*,")—that they are entitled to the covenant privileges belonging to the "household" of faith. Doddridge says, (and with him agree, the great mass of the most distinguished commentators—as well as the great mass of the Christian world)—"*On the maturest and the most impartial consideration of this text, I must refer it to infant baptism.*" Indeed, this is the natural interpretation of the passage, and the most rigid scrutiny of the use of the words in the original language not only bears out this interpretation, but condemns every other that has been advanced. And so surely does this natural interpretation prove infant baptism to be an ordinance of God, that opposers of the ordinance have felt that there is no relief but to set aside the interpretation. I

have read many subtle and earnest comments and essays, written with much talent and pains,—to *set aside* this interpretation; but I have not yet found one which attempts to reconcile it with a denial of the ordinance.

The many ingenious, jarring, and mutually destructive glosses, which have been put upon this passage to avoid the dreaded conclusion, show how sensibly they feel the difficulty; and how hard they find it to hit upon one which shall seem tenable or plausible to all even among themselves. The one most commonly received and relied on is that of the famous Dr. Gill; which supposes the Apostle to mean, "Else were your children *illegitimate*, but now are they *legitimate*." The absurdities of this gloss are manifold and palpable. It is sufficient to mention one or two. 1. The terms which he renders "legitimate" and "illegitimate" have no such meaning any where else in any author, sacred or profane; of course the rendering is a sheer *invention*,—the effort of a subtle wit to extricate itself from an unpleasant difficulty. It is impossible that those to whom the apostle wrote should understand him to mean so. It would be just

as much to the point, and no grosser license, to render the word, "Else were your children *cripples*, but now are they *sound*. 2. The gloss proceeds upon the ineffable absurdity of proving the lawfulness of the marriage by the legitimacy of the children. A conclusion, to avoid which, such absurdities must be encountered, is surely irresistible.

While the substance of this gloss is retained in the *text* of the "*Scripture Guide to Baptism*," published by "the Baptist General Tract Society," another gloss is introduced in a *note* (in some editions, in the *appendix*) by the authority of the "Directors" of the Society. Both glosses cannot, of course, be true. By which they intend to abide, I know not: whether by the text or note: or which they wish us to receive and hold as the truth; or whether to plant a foot on each, as doubting whether either is sound: or whether to retain both, that one may meet some minds that are not met by the other. The *note* proposes to consider the passage, not as referring to the lawfulness of the marriage or to the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the children, but to consider it as though the argument were, *If a believer put*

away a wife or a husband as an unbeliever, he must put away his children also. But this is not the argument. The argument of the Apostle is the reverse of this. He *assumes* that the children are holy or clean : and from this fact assumed as admitted and well known, he convinces the Corinthians that the believing husband need not put away his unbelieving wife, since, in that case, a consequence would follow, which (he assumes) THEY KNOW CANNOT FOLLOW. The argument of the ritual holiness of the children, is based upon the fact of such children's having been treated as a "Holy seed" connected with the church of God. The reference in such case, can be to no other than to infant baptism as notoriously practised in the church.

I cannot but think, that had the Apostle meant to say what the note represents him as saying, that rather than leaving that meaning to be *inferred* by a course of reasoning which requires so many ages to produce one mind even to guess it out, he would have said so directly, instead of using the circuitous way of talking about "unclean" and "holy," words which would naturally mislead his

hearers, which actually mislead the ancient church, as well as so many modern believers, and indeed the great mass of the whole Christian world; for in truth there are as yet few even among the Baptists, that have ever understood the passage according to the tenor of the note in question.

The common interpretation, therefore, stands: and I adduce this text as evidence that as the children of believers had been joined in covenant privileges with the Abrahamic church, they are recognised in the New Testament as sustaining the same relation to the Christian church.

Turn now to another source of argument. But first let me make some preliminary remarks to show the value of the evidence, and to vindicate it from objections that have been raised against it.

The *Sabbath* was instituted at the creation: and though *weeks* are mentioned in the sacred history, the *Sabbath* is not again mentioned till Moses: yet how important the Sabbath was considered in the sight of God is well known. Again it is not mentioned from the time of Joshua till the reign of David, and yet, (as says Dr. Humphrey,) "It will be admitted that, beyond all doubt,

the pious Judges of Israel, remembered the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Moreover, the Bible says nothing of *circumcision* from a little after Moses till the days of Jeremiah, a period of eight hundred years; yet doubtless circumcision was practised all the while.

In like manner, our Missionary Herald, each volume of which is twenty times as large as the book of Acts, is now in the progress of the 36th volume. In the whole of these, containing the journals of so many Missionaries, narrating every important incident with so much minuteness, and continued for so many years, there are very few instances mentioned of infant baptism. I have not the means at hand of ascertaining how many, but though I have long been familiar with them, and have long observed the fact with some curiosity, and have specially examined not a little, I am not able to find or to call to mind more than a very few instances previously to the last two years. But we know that the Missionaries of the American Board are all Pædo-baptists. The paucity of these records of infant baptisms in their letters does not prove that they do

not baptize infants: we know they do; and once in a while the fact is mentioned, but it is rare, though their converts amount to many thousands.

Suppose now, that at the present time, you find a pamphlet of some twenty or thirty pages, like a single monthly number of the Missionary Herald, only half as large,—covering the ground of some fifty years,—and giving an account of the doings of some Missionaries of whom you have never heard before. The question is asked are they *Baptist* Missionaries; or do they baptize the infant *children* of believing parents? On examining the pamphlet we find such records as these: at such a time "I baptized—in the night—a Jailor and all his:" at such a time "Lydia and her household:" at such a time, "I baptized also the household of Stephanas." Nothing is said as to whether they were all adults, or whether, as is more common, there were children in these households. Only this is certain, that if there were children they were certainly baptized. Suppose further, that at this crisis, we discover copious letters of these Missionaries, written to their converts from heathenism;

in which letters they use the term household just as we do the word family. Are they Baptist Missionaries? The presumption is that they are not. You find a difficulty, which must be removed before you can believe that they are Baptists. Moreover, you take the journals of the Baptist Missionaries of fifty or a hundred times the size of this newly discovered pamphlet, and a hundred times more full. You do not learn that they ever give an account of the baptism of a single *household*: though you can understand how desirable it would be to make such a record as frequent in their journals as possible: and how readily they would be brought forward in argument as often as they might occur.

You now make another discovery: viz.—that these unknown Missionaries consider the Abrahamic and the Christian church the same. Now let one passage be found in a single letter of theirs to one of their churches gathered from heathenism, to this effect: "The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, and the unbelieving husband, is sanctified by the wife, else were your children *unclean*, but now are they *holy*:" let it be proved that they familiarly use

these terms in the Jewish sense:—let but one such passage as this be found, and the question is settled: THEY BAPTIZE CHILDREN. Who could ask for more convincing proof, unless he is determined that nothing shall prove it, save an *express* declaration in so many words, or a miracle? I might appeal to any man accustomed to sifting and weighing evidence in our courts of justice, is not this valid proof of the fact? Were it a question of fact to be decided by mere impartial jurors in our courts of law—whether these Missionaries practised infant baptism; could there be a doubt how—on this evidence—the question would be decided? Could there be a doubt that the virdict would be, *These men believe in infant baptism and practise it.*

Make it known now, that these men are the Apostles of our Lord, acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and the interpretation of the law of baptism, which extends baptism to the infants of believing parents, has a *Divine warrant:* and *Infant baptism is an ordinance of God.*

Strong as this evidence is, it is further corroborated in the fact,

IV. *That the whole church received* INFANT BAPTISM—AS SEVERAL OF THE EARLY FATHERS DECLARE, AND AS THE CHURCH AT LARGE BELIEVED,—FROM THE APOSTLES; AND THAT THE WHOLE CHURCH, TOGETHER WITH ALL SECTS OF HERETICS, PRACTISED IT, WITH NOT A MAN TO RAISE HIS VOICE AGAINST ITS DIVINE WARRANT FOR MORE THAN THIRTY GENERATIONS AFTER CHRIST.

Some of the apostles were spared to the church a long time, and the interval between the last of them and the earliest of the Christian fathers is very brief. Thus, Peter and Paul lived till about A. D. 68; Jude, Thomas, and Luke, till about A. D. 74, and John lived till about A. D. 100.

Before this last date *Justin Martyr* was born, in the midst of Christians at Neapolis in Samaria. About 40 years after the death of John, he published his first Apology for the Christians, addressed to Antoninus Pius. In that Apology he says, "Many persons of both sexes, some sixty, some seventy years old, were made disciples to Christ from *childhood*," (ἐκ παιδων)—the same word that Luke uses where he says, Jesus took *infants* in his arms). On this passage, President

Dwight, justly remarks, that "There never was any other mode of making disciples from infancy except by *baptism*." Dr. Pond also says, "They were doubtless made such (disciples) by baptism:" for the same word "made disciples" (εμαθετευθησαν), is used by Christ in the commission, "Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them."

Irenaeus was born about the time of Justin. He was a pupil of Polycarp of Smyrna, who had been a pupil of the Apostle John. Irenaeus says, "I can describe the spot on which Polycarp sat and expounded; his going in, and coming out; the manner of his life; the figure of his body; the sermons he preached to the multitudes; how he related to us his converse with John, and the rest of those who had seen the Lord; how he mentioned their particular expressions, and what things he had heard from them of the Lord; of his miracles and of his doctrines."* Irenaeus says, "Christ came to save all persons by himself; all I say, who by him are regenerated unto God; *infants*, and little ones, and youths, and elder persons." He constantly employs the term regenerated, for *baptized;* and so means

* Grey, p. 57.

here: thus, when speaking of our Lord's authorizing his apostles to baptize, he says,* "When he gave his disciples the power of *regenerating* unto God, he said unto them, Go teach all nations, baptizing them." *Justin* uses the term in the same sense; speaking of the baptism of the Christian converts, he says, "They are conducted by us to a place where there is water, and are *regenerated* in the same manner in which we were regenerated; for they are then *washed* in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.†

Whether these fathers meant by "*regenerated*," what some later ones did mean, that baptism confers an inward regeneration, so that those who are baptized are simultaneously and inwardly regenerated by the Holy Ghost, it is foreign to my purpose now to inquire. Whatever were their views of *doctrine*, they are certainly good witnesses with regard to a matter of *fact;* viz., whether infants were in their day baptized: and such is the clear import of their testimony.

* Gray, p. 58. † Ibid, p. 58.

Tertullian was born a little later than Irenaeus, about A. D. 145. He ran into all manner of vagaries of doctrine; but this invalidates not his testimony with regard to a matter of *fact*, whether the church in his day baptized infants. He advises the *delay* of baptism not only in the case of children, but of youths and unmarried people. In the case of little children he says, "For what need, *except in case of necessity*, that their godfathers should be in danger? Because they may "either fail of their promises by death, or they may be deceived by a child's proving of a wicked disposition." He supposed that the act of baptism washed away sins; and therefore would have not only infants but youth and unmarried persons delay, till they should be less exposed to temptations, that they might have the greater benefit of the baptism and have a smaller score of sins to answer for afterwards.* He says of infants: "What need their innocent age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins," (viz. by *baptism*:) He thus fully recognizes the practice of infant

* Among other strange notions that he fell into, one was, that sin *after* baptism could never be pardoned.—Hence he advised the delay of baptism.

baptism as in common use. "*And speaks against it*," say our Baptist brethren.—True, he does: but he speaks against it as against a thing in common use. The question is not whether Tertullian is against it or for it; but whether it was in use in his day. He does not pretend that baptism is an innovation, or unlawful, or that it had not been in use from the days of the apostles. He pleads for delay, on the ground of advantage, and on the same ground pleads that youths and unmarried persons would be gainers by delay. He places the reason for delay in both instances, on the same ground. But surely our Baptist brethren will not receive his *reasons* for delay in either case. His testimony to the fact remains; the more unquestionable for its being incidental, and for his whimsical bias against it.

Origen was born 85 years after Christ. In his homily on Luke xiv. he says, "*Infants are baptized* for the forgiveness of sins." Again in his homily on Levit. viii. he says, "What is the reason why the baptism of the church, which is given for the remission for sins, is by the usage of the church *given to*

infants also?"* He is endeavoring to establish the doctrine of original sin, and adduces the practice of infant baptism as a proof of it. Again, in his comment on Romans: "For this also it was, that the church had from the *Apostles* a tradition to give baptism to infants."*

Ambrose, Chrysostom, Cyprian, and Gregory Nazianzen speak expressly of the practice of infant baptism.

Augustine, in reference to the Pelagians says, "Since they grant that infants must be baptized, as not being able to resist the authority of the church, *which was doubtless delivered by our Lord and his apostles*, they must consequently grant that they stand in need of the benefit of the mediator."†

Again, Augustine against the Donatists, speaking of the baptism of infants, says, "Which the whole body of the church holds, *as delivered to them*, in the case of little infants baptized,—and yet no Christian man will say they are baptized to no purpose."‡

Augustine again:—"The custom of our mother church in baptizing infants must not be disregarded nor accounted needless, *nor*

* Gray, p. 64. † Ibid. ‡ Dr. Miller, p. 36, 37.

believed to be any thing else than an ordinance delivered to us FROM THE APOSTLES."*

Again, he declares that he "*never met with any Christian*, either of the general church or of any of the sects, *nor with any writer who owned the authority of the Scriptures*, who taught any other doctrine than that *infants are to be baptized* for the remission of sin." He declares that it *was not instituted by councils, but was always in use.*†

Now, in opposition to the testimony of these witnesses, we have the Tract,—"THE SCRIPTURE GUIDE TO BAPTISM," published by "THE GENERAL BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY:" and this *Tract* says, "*Our* principles are as old as Christianity. Persons holding our distinctive principles, *i. e.* the baptism of believers *only*, have appeared in all ages of the Christian era. From Christ to nearly the end of the 2d century, there were NO OTHERS," (the word "no others" in capitals,) "at least, if there were any, their history is a blank. After infant baptism was introduced, many opposed it." So says this tract by Pengilly. Round assertion! But on what proof? Not a scrap is offered; and that for the best of all reasons, there is no such evi-

* Miller on Baptism, p. 37. † Ibid.

dence in the world. It has been sought; most ardently has it been longed for; but there is none: no—none even to hang a pretence upon. It is *asserted* that none practiced infant baptism till near the end of the 2d century: but do they pretend to tell how it was introduced *then;* and that so quietly as to be every where received in Europe and Asia, and all along the coast of Africa and throughout the Christian world; and nobody know but that they had always practised it from the days of the Apostles! No—not one poor lisp;—not a syllable to show how or when it was introduced! It is *asserted*, that "*when* it was introduced many did not receive it, and many opposed it." *Who* did not receive it? The fathers declare they never heard of such a man; nor do our Baptist brethren attempt to say who. *Who* opposed it? Echo answers, Who? Our Baptist brethren do not attempt to tell who. But the "General Tract Society" of the denomination send out this *Tract* to assert in round terms that "to nearly the end of the 2d century, there *were* NO OTHERS" than Baptists on the question of baptizing infants, and, that "after infant baptism was introduced, many opposed it!"

But let us go on with the testimony. *Palagius*, denied the doctrine of original sin, and was pressed with the absurdity of infant baptism on his principles. Could he have denied infant baptism, or shown it to be a corruption, it would have relieved him from his difficulties and given him a signal triumph. He was a man of great abilities and great learning, and had traveled the Christian world over. He and his coadjutor, Celestius, used every means to relieve themselves from the pressure of the question, "Why are infants baptized for the remission of sins, if they have none?" With this argument, says, Dr. Pond,* "Pelagius and his abettors were much embarrassed, and had recourse to a variety of evasions in order to escape from it." But they never denied infant baptism. They never pretended that it was a corruption or innovation. On the contrary, Pelagius says, "Baptism ought to be administered to infants with the same sacramental words which are used in the case of adults." "Men slander me," said he, "as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants;" and again, "I NEVER HEARD OF ANY,

* Dr. Pond on Baptism, p. 107.

not even the most impious heretic, WHO DENIED BAPTISM TO INFANTS.*

It is easy to see, from these extracts, that the Christian church early slid away from purity in doctrine; and that many of the old Fathers were not very sound theologians. I adduce them not to prove a point in *theology* by their opinion; I adduce them, not to build infant baptism on their authority; I adduce them as *witnesses to a matter of fact*:—that from the time of the apostles, infant baptism was every where practised, and understood to have been received from the apostles, with no man any where to lisp a breath in favor of a contrary supposition; but with the unbroken and uniform belief that its authority rested on a foundation none other than the practice of apostles who were inspired of God.

If it had ever been a corrupt innovation, would there not have been somewhere some controversy about it? Would all, every where, have so unanimously have agreed to receive it? Would every trace of such innovation or such controversy have perished from history; so that men living near the

* Dr. Pond on Baptism, p. 108.

apostolic age, though under the strongest inducement to seek out such history, had it existed, could never be able to find the least trace or fragment of it, or even to suspect its existence! *Could* these things be so? Can you believe them to be so? Can you stretch your credulity to that point with ever so great an effort? But unless what is so improbable and incredible be certainly true; then infant baptism was practised by the apostles, and rests for its authority upon the authority of God. Now we know how to interpret the command, "Go and teach (disciple) all nations, *baptizing* them;"—it means, "Baptize believers and their infant children. It means, to observe the order of the ancient covenant: which made God the God of believers and of their seed after them. A flood of light is thrown upon the interpretation of such passages as represent Christ as taking little children in his arms, and saying, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." It corroborates our understanding of those narratives which speak of the baptism of households. It corroborates the natural interpretation of that passage which says, "The unbelieving husband

is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." One by one, we have taken up these stones fitted by the chisel. They match together. We build on. They grow into an arch, as if formed by the Great Master Builder with that design. Not a stone is wanting. The key stone is driven. Each stone lends its aid to strengthen the whole. The work is complete. It stands. It will stand eternally; and round its circling brow is graven as in letters sunk deep in the enduring rock, and illumined by the rays of heaven :—"THE BAPTISM OF THE INFANT CHILDREN OF BELIEVING PARENTS, RESTS FOR ITS FOUNDATION, UPON NO LESS A BASIS THAN THE AUTHORITY OF GOD."

IV.

INFANT BAPTISM.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED: ITS UTILITY VINDICATED.

ROMANS III. 1—3.

What advantage then, hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

THE authority of infant baptism we have already considered. I shall now proceed to answer some objections which have been urged against the practice; and to vindicate its utility.

Before I proceed to these points, however, I desire to say a little more with regard to the *History* of infant baptism. I proved, I trust to your satisfaction, that infant bap-

tism was practised from the times of the Apostles, with not a man to lift up his voice against the Divine authority of the practice, for the first four hundred years after Christ.

But our Baptist brethren claim that the *Waldenses* maintained their views and rejected infant baptism.

Now granting that they did; we cannot trace the Waldenses up to the period of four hundred years after Christ, and their testimony cannot at all affect the matters already in proof.

But the Waldenses are venerable witnesses; and though no testimony of theirs can affect the truth which we have already proved, and which rests upon ground to which their testimony does not reach; still we are willing and desirous to hear what these venerable witnesses, the Waldenses, say.

And here I quote from Dr. Miller.* He says, "It is worthy of particular notice that those far-famed witnesses for the truth, the Waldenses, *did undoubtedly hold the doctrine of infant baptism, and practise accordingly.*"

* On Baptism, p. 33 and 40.

What proof does Dr. Miller bring for this assertion? The best possible proof: their own "confessions of faith,"—and other of their writings drawn up between the 12th century and the period of the Reformation. "In which," says Dr. Miller, "they represent their creeds and usages *as handed down from father to son, for several hundred years before the Reformation.*"

"And for this cause," say the Waldenses, "it is, that *we present our children in baptism*, which ought to be done by those to whom the children are most nearly related, such as parents," &c. Again, "The things which are not necessary in baptism are exorcisms, the breathings,—the sign of the cross *upon the head or forehead* OF THE INFANT,—the salt put into the mouth, the spittle into the ears, and nostrils," &c.

Understanding that their Popish neighbors charged them with denying the baptism of infants, they acquit themselves thus: "yet notwithstanding, *we bring our children to be baptized.*"*

* *Dr Murdock* (Note on Mosheim, Vol. iii, p. 228, 229,) says,—"It is a well known historic fact, that in the 16th century, the genuine descendants of the old

I now proceed to ANSWER OBJECTIONS; AND TO VINDICATE THE UTILITY OF INFANT BAPTISM.

It is asked, "*What good can it do to sprinkle an unconscious babe?*"

If this be asked with regard to the effect of the bare act of sprinkling, I answer, *no good*. Nor does the bare act of baptizing an adult do any good, through any virtue in the act; sprinkle,—pour,—*plunge*,—*wash*,—*scour*,—do what you will. The bare *act*

Waldensians, Wickliffites, and Hussites, who were numerous in France, England, &c., readily united with the Lutheran and the Reformed communities, and at length became absorbed in them; and THAT VERY FEW if ANY of them, ever manifested a preference for the *Mennonite* or FOR ANY OF THE ANTI-PÆDO-BAPTIST sects of, that age"—"And if we endeavor to trace the history of that grand peculiarity of all Mennonites, their confining baptism to adult believers, and rejecting infant baptism altogether, we shall find, that at the time *Menno* first embraced it, it existed *among the numerous* GERMAN ANABAPTISTS, but NOT AMONG THE WALDENSES of France or Bohemia, *who were then* UNIVERSALLY BELIEVERS IN INFANT BAPTISM." "These Waldensian Pædo-baptists, moreover, declared that they held the same belief which their fathers had maintained for several centuries; and they appealed to their old books, to make good their assertions." "There were, indeed, various mystical sects, tinctured more or

has no virtue in it; and the bare water does no good, whatever be the mode of applying it; and no matter whether the subject of it be conscious or unconscious.

But if God has commanded it, as a token, —as a seal of his covenant—as a means of keeping parents and children and the world in mind of the great truth that the *sins* need to be washed away by "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ;" and that the *polluted soul*, even of the infant, needs the "washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;"—if God sees fit to appoint it as a *sign of his covenant*, as he appointed the bow in the cloud for the encouragement of men in another respect;—if he sees fit to

less with Manichean views, in the 12th and following centuries, who rejected *all water baptism*, on much the same ground as the Quakers still do, and *some of them* assailed infant baptism *especially*, as being peculiarly unsuitable and absurd." There is also pretty good evidence that early in the 12th century, *Peter Bruis*, and his successor *Henry*, with their followers, the *Petrobrussians* and *Henricians*, did at first reject infant baptism, &c. "But soon after, *Peter Waldo* arose, and gave birth to the proper Waldensians; and we hear no more of the Petrobrussians and Henricians. They probably gave up their opposition to infant baptism."

appoint it for its *salutary influence* upon the parent's heart, to encourage his prayers and his efforts for the spiritual good of his child ;—or if he sees fit to appoint it as *an encouragement to piety* by putting honor upon the piety of parents;—or if to *make his claim to the soul* of that child ; and, by affixing his seal, to challenge of him who has received it, love and duty through all the remainder of his life ;—or for *whatever unknown and secret* reason other than these, God has seen fit to appoint the sign, then it does good to obey God, even if there is no good done by the bare act of baptizing an unconscious babe. Doubtless there are wise and important reasons. Some important uses we can see and feel ; and though the baptism be not on the infant's faith, yet how often did the Savior grant healing to diseased children, on account of the faith and importunity of the parents ; as in the case of the Syrophenician woman, and of the Centurion, whose faith brought healing even to his afflicted servant ?

The inquiry, then, " What good can it do to the unconscious babe," in the first place, proceeds upon a ground which none of us,

nor even the objector, holds otherwise than as idle and false; viz., that the bare *act* of baptizing, of itself, does good to any body. In the second place, it is an appeal not to piety, but to infidelity. In the third place, it proposes to men to inquire concerning what they hold as an ordinance of Jehovah, "What good can it do?" And if the question could carry its aim, and establish its principle, it would lead men to reject whatever commands of God, the reasons of which are not plain to their understanding. On this ground Abraham would never have left his father's house: he would never have proceeded to offer up his son for a burnt offering.

Surely, we shall not be driven from faith and duty by this illogical and infidel objection, how often soever our brethren may see fit to sound it in our ears! Surely, it is not good to disobey God under the notion that he has required what can do no good! How easy would it have been to ask the same question with regard to *circumcising* infants? How easy to pour out a torrent of ribaldry upon "*such*" an ordinance, as "doing good" to an unconscious babe! How

many worse things might have been said of it than are said of the ordinance which we sometimes hear ridiculed under the name of "baby sprinkling!" Should the Patriarchs and their posterity therefore set it aside; and suffer themselves to be jeered out of God's covenant promises for their children?

But again it is asked, "*Do you believe that infants are lost if they die unbaptized?*" No, no, no! We believe no such thing: we fear no such thing. But shall we take it for granted that our infants are to die in infancy, and therefore disobey God, and exhibit our contempt for his covenant? If, peradventure, they should *live*, can we be sure that no effects of our disobedience and unbelief may come down upon them; either by the natural influence of that unbelief, or by the special displeasure of God upon those who break his covenant? Or if we may be sure of this, is it certainly best to disobey God?

But again, it is asked, "*Do you think baptism a regenerating and saving ordinance? Do you think it sure that the children whom you baptize will ever be converted and saved; at least in consequence of the baptism? And*

if not, to what profit is the baptism, if it neither converts nor ensures future conversion; and if multitudes who are baptized are never converted or saved?"

If we could not answer particularly to these inquiries, it would still be enough to be able to give this answer: "*God has so instructed us:*" and it would be quite as good an answer as Abraham could have given when he was about to do a greater thing; and when much harder questions might have been asked concerning the propriety of the act; to wit, when Abraham was about to offer up his son Isaac, as a burnt offering.

But Paul shall answer these inquiries in detail. Objectors argued of old as objectors argue now; and while they meant no such thing, they have caused the Bible to be made all the richer: just as all errors and heresies, and all the objections of infidels, subsequent to the age of revelation, have only served to bring out the truth more clear and glorious than it ever would have appeared in the eyes of the world. Who knows but these objections were made and answered and recorded to meet just such emergencies as these? Who knows but that God de-

signs, through the spirited and persevering efforts by which our Baptist brethren shake the minds of some, and overthrow the faith of others,—to establish his truth and his ordinances the more firmly, and to let his Church see more clearly than they ever would have seen, the Divine warrant; and the large benefits of his covenant, and of the application of its seal to their infant children.

The objection is, "*That the ordinance does neither convert, nor ensure conversion: that many who receive it are never converted in their lives: and that it seems useless, if not a mockery, to apply a seal significant of inward cleansing, and implying a covenant of spiritual blessings to those who have not, and may never have, the reality.*"

I think I have stated the objection as fully and as strongly as any can desire.

Paul shall answer it, and turn the tables upon the objector, by more thoroughly establishing the point than if it had never been questioned.

In Rom. ii, he has been showing the Jew, that neither the law, nor the covenant, nor its seal, nor its promises, can save him,

without his own personal faith; and by that same faith, the Gentile may be saved as well as the Jew. Nay, more, all the seals and privileges are *null* to the Jew, if he be a "breaker of the law;" and if the Gentile keep the law, it shall be with him as though he had been circumcised. Thus, verses 25, 26, "But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision; therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the right eousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision:"—and verses 28, 29, "For he is not a Jew, (i. e. a child of God,) which is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of man but of God."

Here, the conditions are as are supposed in the objection against infant baptism. Those *with* the seal shall not be saved without their own personal qualifications; and those *without* the seal shall be saved with those qualifications. It is one God who shall justify the *circumcision* by faith, and the *uncircumcision* through faith. Moreover,

the seal is applied to those who are not converted by it; and many of them are not converted at all. Moreover, the seal is one significant of inward cleansing, "in the heart and in the spirit:" and so connected with a covenant which has salvation for its end.

The conditions are precisely the same as those supposed in the objections against infant baptism. Why apply a seal of such a signification, and of *such* a covenant, to them who are not inwardly cleansed by it, and who may never be converted at all? Is it not mockery? At least, is it not useless?

Paul had either heard the objection made, or his natural forecast taught him it would be made; or, rather—the Holy Ghost, to answer all such objections then and forever, caused the objection to be started in the form of this inquiry: Rom. iii. 1-3, "*What advantage, then, hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?* (viz. if the circumcision does not convert him, nor ensure that he shall be converted: and if the circumcised person cannot be saved on other conditions than the uncircumcised?) "*Much every way*," answers the Apostle. Chiefly

because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. *For what if some did not believe?* (It was with the circumcised as with the baptized, some did not believe; and the unbelievers were lost as much as though they had been uncircumcised: just as unbelievers will be lost, though they may *have been baptized.*) "*For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.*"

The unbelief of some, then, is no objection against the covenant of God, or against his faithfulness to that covenant: and notwithstanding the objection, there is *every way* MUCH *profit* of circumcision. It was still the seal of God's covenant. A score of centuries after Jehovah's promise to be the God of Abraham and his seed, the seed of Abraham "as touching the election," were "*beloved for the* FATHERS' SAKE." "And *because he loved* THY FATHERS, he chose THEIR SEED AFTER THEM:" and, Deut. vii,—"Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, *to a thousand generations.*"

The blessings of this covenant, it was foretold, should come upon the Gentiles. Abraham was to be the "father of *many nations*." The promise was to be "sure to *all* the seed, not only to *that which is of the law*, but to that which is *of faith*." Nay, the prophets who foretold the glory of Christ's kingdom, when they spake in the most glowing strains, made mention of this same arrangement under the dispensation of Christ. Thus,—Isa. lxv. 17, and onward.—"For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad, and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy."—"They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, *for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord*, AND THEIR OFFSPRING WITH THEM."

Well might the apostle Peter cry out, "For the *promise is to you* AND TO YOUR CHILDREN, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Well might Paul declare, "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and *heirs according to the promise*."

God appears to have designed to make a large use of the *family influence* in establishing and perpetuating the Gospel of salvation: in keeping alive on the earth Gospel truth and Gospel ordinances. For this reason he ordained that the marriage relation should be limited to one husband and one wife. Thus, Mal. ii. 14, 15, "Yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. And did He not make *one?* Yet had He the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore *one?* THAT HE MIGHT SEEK A GODLY SEED." For the same end he established his covenant in the household of Abraham. "For I know him," said the Lord, "*that he will command his children and his household after him;* and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment: *that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*" On the same principle it is said, Ps. lxxviii, 5-7, "For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and teach

them to *their* children: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

God was pleased to ordain that his blessing and the fruits of pious labor and of prayer should go together: *and he graciously established and sealed this ordinance by covenant.* The reason for the covenant and the seal remaining, they remain. They remain enlarged and ratified in Christ to the end of time. Shall we be told that it does no good to *remember* this covenant?—no good, as we look on the *seal*, to let the promise of the covenant encourage our hearts, and quicken our prayers? Has the Lord mistaken his appointment; and given an unnecessary covenant and a useless seal? Shall we conclude so? Shall we so requite the Lord?

We cannot: for when we look, we find that in the line of the seed of the promise, (that of Gentile believers as well as that of the law,)—in this line of the promised seed, have been found from age to age the mass of those who have been saved. God bestows his grace where he has given his covenant; where he has deposited his word; where his

ordinances are observed; and where the voice of prayer and of faith ascends. Pagan lands bear not the fruits of Christendom. Those places in Christendom, where the oracles of God, the preaching of the word, and the ordinances are not, are not visited with showers of grace and blessed with a godly seed, like those places where the ordinances and the word are enjoyed. The fathers of an ungodly community hand down ungodliness and perdition to their children; and often, upon their children's children to the fourth generation are the iniquities of the fathers' visited; no less by the laws of nature, than by the providence, and according to the word of God. The true worshipers of God bequeath their sanctuaries, their Sabbaths, and their divine ordinances, to their posterity; who have been imbued with the principles of Divine truth, and trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. There the grace of God showers down the influence of the Holy Spirit. From these are taken those who are to be the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

Shall we be told that all this is *natural*, and pertains not to the provision of the

covenant? WHO MADE IT NATURAL? Do not the arrangements which God has made in the natural world show as well as any other, *what is his pleasure?* And do they not show us here that it *is his pleasure* TO BE THE GOD OF BELIEVERS AND OF THEIR SEED AFTER THEM? Shall it be thought wonderful that he has ratified by *covenant* what he has appointed in nature? And if the covenant were to pass away, would not the great truth still remain true in *nature*, that God is pleased to be the God of believers, and of their seed after them?

But, is it *all* natural? Is there NO GRACE, in determining who shall be the heirs of salvation? Shall we be told that the covenant is nothing, because God has arranged powerful means to secure the fulfilment of its promises? Surely none can make this objection, who do not at the same time forget, that the grace of God which brings renewing and salvation to an individual soul, is quite beyond the effect of the most powerful means, and depends upon the sovereign act of a sovereign God. In giving his Spirit, he is sovereign; and his sovereignty works in such a way as to fulfil the promise of his covenant.

But when we look at this point more fully, the light breaks upon us in increasing splendor. An attention to facts shows that God does remember his covenant, and put honor upon its seal. From the published and official returns of the Congregational Churches of Connecticut to the General Association in 1834, it appears that *two-thirds* of all that were received to these churches on profession of faith, the preceding year, had been baptized in infancy. Struck with this fact I was curious to add up the results for several years, and found them very nearly the same. The results of an examination of like reports of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and of the General Association of New York were not essentially different. About two-thirds of all those received to our Pædo-baptist Churches on confession of faith, are such as were baptized in their infancy.* But taking the whole field, the baptized children constitute, probably, not more than *one*-third of the children attached

* Of more than one hundred so received by the church in this place, during the eight years of the writer's ministry, about *three-fourths* were baptized in their infancy.

to the congregations of these churches, or falling properly to no other denomination. The state of the case, then, is this; out of *one*-third of a given population, *two* are hopefully converted, and brought into the Church, where there is *one* so converted out of the remaining *two*-thirds: a ratio of *four* to *one!* What will this amount to in the whole country? What, in the whole world? What will it amount to, if you trace it down to the end of time? To a "multitude which is as the sand by the sea-shore, innumerable!" But in the Western and Southern parts of the country, the difference is more striking than in New England; because the proportion of the members of the Church of Christ to the whole population is far less. And these results are witnessed, when so much confident denunciation of infant baptism has led so many members of the Church to neglect it; and led so many more to regard it as a mere ritual rather than as the valuable seal of God's covenant. Oh, what might have been done, had parents taken hold of that covenant with unwavering faith; and, pleading the covenant, had taken encouragement from its promises, and from God's

faithfulness, to be more earnest in the discharge of the duties which that covenant implies on the part of parents! Who is to answer for all this loss and harm! Who is to be responsible for teaching the Church of God to neglect and despise both the covenant and its seal.

But it is alleged that the children of Baptist families are blessed also. We are glad to believe it. We praise God for it. This proves that God is faithful to his covenant, even when his people have not the grace to own it, and give God thanks for it. It is the promise of the covenant that continues to them a godly seed. Is it not strange, while the fruit remains, that the tree should be accounted dead? But are they sure that the blessing follows in an equal degree that it would, did they acknowledge and plead the covenant? Are all these rich promises, these numerous and ample declarations, by which God engages to be the God of his people, and of their seed after them, so poor as to be thrown lightly away; and that, for the strange reason that God has arranged the means of fulfilling them, and does actually fulfil them?

If our brethren choose to reject the covenant and its seal, will they not, at least allow us and our children to enjoy it in peace? We have studied the matter as well as they. We have a conscience to answer as well as they. We have the Bible in our hands, and we know fully all the objections of our brethren. May we never enjoy in peace the ordinances which we truly hold dear, as granted us and enjoined upon us by the oracles of God? Are we never to have done hearing it ridiculed as "Popery," "superstition," and "mockery?" Is no respect due to our understanding?—none to our regard for the truth?—none to our religious integrity, and to our fear of God? And yet, what we are often compelled to hear, and what is often and diligently thrown upon the members of our churches to deter them from this holy ordinance, take the following from "The New-York *Baptist Register*" of May 1st as a specimen.

"If a parent is tempted to sprinkle his babe, he should remember, 1st, That he has no right to take advantage of the helpless state of his babe, and enslave it to usurpers; 2d, He has no right to countenance a mock-

ery of Christ's ordinances; 3d, He has no right to dedicate his child in connection with a delusion; it will make him feel as if the matter were done up for life; 4th, He has no right to countenance a deluded and crazed minister solemnly telling a falsehood, however honest he may be in it, by saying, "I baptize thee," when he does no such thing; and by saying he does it in the name of the Trinity, when it is not so; 5th, There are so many false principles in the transaction, he should stop and consider well; he that doubteth is condemned if he do it. There is every reason to believe it to be a deception."*

Fathers and mothers in the Church of God; have you ever felt, when you have claimed the privileges of the covenant for your children, that the mere application of the seal changed the hearts of these children or ensured that it would ever be done? Have you ever felt, that, having done this, the matter was "done up for life?" Were *you* so instructed in your childhood? Did you *ever* feel so? Fathers and mothers in *this* Church of God; ye whose memories

* See the New-York Evangelist of May 30, 1840.

embrace the days of Benedict, Eaton, Swan, and Burnet; have you ever heard such a doctrine taught from this pulpit? Has any thing that could countenance such a notion ever fallen upon your ears in this house of God? I look around and see many youths from whom, it is not many months since I heard the inquiry, What shall we do to be saved. Dear youths, did it ever enter into your minds, that because you had been baptized, the business was done up for life; or that you were relieved at all from the necessity of being born of the Spirit; of repenting and turning to God, if you would be saved?

I too am a parent. I know the hallowed and deep impressions of a parent in presenting his child to receive the seal of God's covenant; I know how strong is the impression made upon a parent's soul, that his offspring are the degenerate plants of a strange vine; fallen, depraved beings, who must receive the inward washing of regeneration, of which the outward baptism is but the sign, or be lost. I know it comforts a parent's heart, as he looks forward to the future life of that child, and forward to the

eternal world; to be able to claim that blessed promise, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee." I know how solemn is the impression made upon the parent's heart, of the covenant, which, in this transaction, he takes upon his soul, to train up this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

It is vain for the world to inquire of the Christian, "What is the use of taking a morsel of bread and a little wine at the communion? Is there any benefit in a mere ceremony?" When the Christian has felt the presence of the Savior at his table; when his soul has been kindled into near communion with Christ, as the simple emblems of his Savior's body and blood have set forth that Savior's love, and sufferings, and faithfulness in connection with the tenderness of that dying charge—"*This do in remembrance of me.*" O, it is vain then for the world to ask him, What profit is there in a mere ceremony! So with the parent who has felt the influence of that solemn act—the baptism of his child,—upon his own heart; and when in after days, he *feels* how it encourages his faith, and deepens his sense of responsibility. Vain is all the language of

reproach and ridicule then. Men may deride this faith, as well as reason against it. What then? Is there an article of his faith which has *not* been impugned and derided; and that too by men bearing the *Christian* name? The divinity of his Savior is denied; the atonement is denied; the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and even his personal existence is denied. The inspiration of the Bible is denied; and now even the personal existence of the Godhead is denied; and all these things by men who call themselves by the name of Christ! If he is to yield every truth which is assailed, and abandon every point that is vehemently impugned and ridiculed; what has he left? His faith, his hope, his consolation, his Redeemer, his Sanctifier, his God, is gone.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." This ground we have proved. We have listened to objections; we have weighed arguments. These have not moved us; how much less shall railing and reproaches move us from that which we have received to hold, as nothing less than an ordinance of the Most High God?

Let us believe. Let us obey. Let us

not only be scrupulous to give our children the seal; but to teach them afterwards its import; to warn them how they slight its obligations, or undervalue its privileges. Let us make it the basis of our plea with our children, that they will not forsake the God of their fathers. Let us make it the ground of our plea with God, that he will give to our children the blessings of the covenant which are implied in the seal. Let us ask these things of our covenant-keeping and faithful God. Let our souls never cease from the throes of earnest desire, till Christ be formed in our children, the hope of glory. Then, when households meet around the throne of God, may the parents and the children rejoice together with exceeding joy; and to the covenant mercy of God shall redound eternal praise.

Are there believing parents who have been misled concerning the truth; or who through the want of a proper understanding of the ordinance; or through unbelief concerning its utility, have neglected to claim its blessings, and to affix the seal of the covenant upon their children? Have they now seen and understood the truth? Then seize the privileges of the covenant, and claim the

seal for your children, if it yet remains within your power; and pray God not to visit your past unbelief or negligence upon you or upon your offspring. Cast not away the privileges of that gracious covenant, which the Lord has deemed worthy of *Him* to offer to his children as a precious boon from their Father and their God.

Let those who are parents, and not yet savingly interested in the covenant of grace, feel for their children as well as for themselves. Perhaps, the seal of the covenant was given to you. Perhaps, to you it descended from generation to generation, through an unbroken line of pious ancestry. It was a token that God, the God of your fathers, was ready to be your God and the God of your children, if you would not by your own unbelief and guilt cast away the blessings of the covenant. Shall the line be broken in you? Think how many generations of the descendants of them who disowned the Messiah, and were broken off and rejected from being the people of God, have wandered away, and stumbled and perished on the dark mountains. Shall *your* children, and perhaps your children's children be thrown aside among the branches

that are broken off? It is true, that no one of them will perish, but for his own sin. But how many a *child*, and how many children's children *do* perish through the *occasion* and influence of an unbelieving and wicked father? I need only refer you to the influence of a Sabbath-breaker, an infidel, a scoffer, a profane, or lewd, or unprincipled man, upon the destinies of his children and more remote descendants. Can we be sure that there may be nothing like this in the influence of him who is the occasion of breaking away from the covenant and its seal; and of cutting his posterity off from privileges and means of grace which the piety of his ancestors, from generation to generation, handed down to him? Is there no such natural tendency or influence in the example of his unbelief?—none in his neglect of household prayer?—none in the separation of him and all his, from the sacraments of the Church of God? Remember and fear that solemn admonition of God to his covenant people of old—"Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee,—seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I *will also forget thy children.*" The

branch may be broken off; but it is not for man to tell when it may ever please God to graft it in again. Oh! son—daughter—of the covenant! what consequences,—aside from the condemnation and ruin of your own soul—may arise from your unbelief, and descend in fruits of wo to generations that are yet unborn! Let the seal of the covenant which was impressed upon you with the tender yearnings of parental faith, remind you of the blessings that you cast away in remaining alienated from God. Call not down upon your own head this double ruin. Break not away from the cords with which God himself would draw you to salvation. Defeat not the prayers of a father's faith, and of a mother's love. Compel not the mercy, that waits to save you, to depart, and to give you up to the hand of justice, as one who, from the gates of heaven, *would* thrust himself down to the despair of hell.

Children of the covenant; ye who were in your infancy dedicated to God; your parents by their acts bind you in secular matters. God and the laws of society have given them this prerogative, not for their advantage, but for yours. It is, then, no

unprecedented thing, when you are by your parents given up to God and sealed with his seal. He *claims* this right in you; the neglect of your parents would not have altered his claim. But would you, if you could,—that when God had graciously given his covenant for their advantage and for yours, that they had thrown away the covenant and denied you the seal? Choose you then, to throw away proffered blessings, and having thrown them away, to take your lot with the world, with no portion but in the uncovenanted mercies of God? Had a rich friend, in your infancy, offered to leave you an estate, if your parent would in your behalf undertake the trust and execute the forms; would you that your parent had refused the gift; and especially if the condition of the gift had obliged him carefully to train you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Surely, you would not be so unwise. Is the case altered when God himself is the giver, and proffers a richer portion than all the kingdoms of this world? Is God a foe to offer this covenant? Is your parent a foe to take and seal it? That seal is to you a token no less of privilege

than of obligation. Will you throw these promises of God away? Will you determine to renounce your baptism, and render it null? You may; but not with ordinary guilt; especially if from infancy you have been the child of prayers and tears to God for your salvation. Oh how rich this boon of the covenant and its seal, which thus pleads with you, our children, to be the children of your fathers' God! Will you disavow the covenant and the seal? Will you disown the obligation which they impose on you to love and serve Jehovah, your fathers' covenant God? You may be so infatuated; but God will not for this release you from the obligation. You may sell your birthright like Esau, but, like Esau, you may find no place for repentance, though you seek it carefully with tears.

O, God of our fathers! our covenant God! Save our children from such a doom as this! Seal them thine own, by working in their souls the reality of that which is signified by the outward sign. Make them thine own by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and thy name shall have all the praise, for ever. Amen.

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